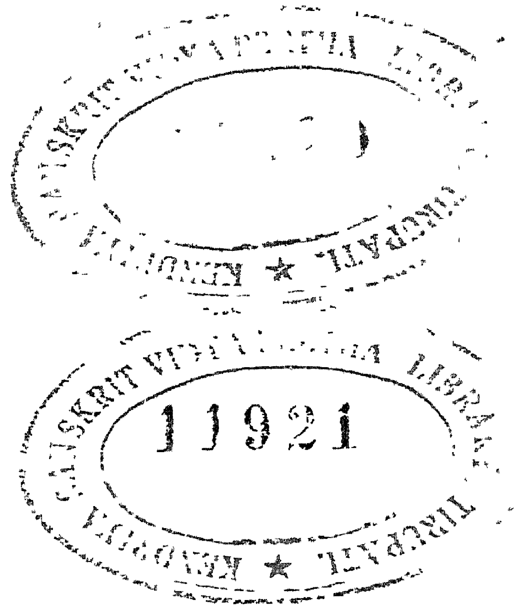
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DUNCAN GREENLEES

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THE GOSPEL OF ADVAITA

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With Introduction, Explanatory Commentary, Full Annotations and Appendix

by
Duncan Greenlees, M.A. (Oxon.)

1953
THE THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE
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THE WORLD GOSPEL SERIES

Gather us in, Thou Love that fillest all,
Gather our rival faiths within Thy fold,
Rend each man's temple-veil and bid it fall
That we may know that Thou hast been of old.
Gather us in; we worship only Thee:
In varied names we stretch a common hand;
In diverse forms a common Soul we see,
In many ships we seek one spirit-land.
Each sees one colour of Thy rainbow light,
Each looks upon one tint and calls it heaven:
Thou art the Fullness of our partial sight—
We are not perfect till we find the seven.

G. MATHESON

APART from a few scholars and devotees, the modern public are unwilling to spend time on reading through the whole of the lengthy Scriptures of the world. This little Series is planned to offer them in a cheap, handy and attractive form the essence of all the world's great Scriptures, translated and edited by one who has a deep and living sympathy for each of them.[1]

[1] Yet it is obvious that the writer does not thereby pronounce his own personal convictions or religious faith.

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DUNCAN GREENLEES

TO

BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI,

A TRUE MASTER,

IN

GRATEFUL HOMAGE AND DEVOTION

O Lord of Silence, on this holy Hill
Revealed as Beacon-light for darkened hearts
Rejoicing in the radiance of Thy grace, that still
Pours down the Influence divine, ...
In every shadow-form prostrating here to Thee
We too bow down ourselves in deep humility;
Awed to a holy silence by the view
Of Thy still Majesty, ourselves subside low, low,
Upon this sacred ground; we hardly dare
To word the one sincere heart-prayer
That of Thine ever-tender grace
Thou shalt remove each soul-besmirching trace
Of that old ego which has veiled so long
The timeless glory of the infinitely Strong.
O let it die beneath the whirling Sword
Of true *Vichāra* wielded by the Silent Lord,
And set us free to know the boundless peace
Of selfless ecstasy which can never cease!
Slay ruthlessly the ancient tyrant, tear
The bonds of self, that we may find Thee every-
where! . . .

Arunāchalam, 16-1-1950

उपदेशसारम्

सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म । तत्त्वमसि । योऽसि सोऽसि ॥

अनिरूप्य स्वरूपं यन्मनोवाचामगोचरम् ।
एकमेवाद्वयं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन ॥
ब्रह्ममात्र इतेवन्हा वैष्ण्यमात्रइते यथा ।
समस्तं खल्विदं ब्रह्म सर्वमात्मेदमाततम् ॥
मनः संपद्यते नाम महतः परमात्मनः ।
सुस्थिरादस्थिराकारं तरङ्ग इव वारिधेः ॥
केवलं चित्तमात्रात्मा कारणं त्रिजगत्स्थितेः ।
ह्यासङ्कल्प पुरुषः पृथ्व्यादि रहिता कृतिः ॥
सत्यत्वेन जगद्भानं संसारस्य प्रवर्तकम् ।
असत्यत्वेन भानं तु संसारस्य निवर्तकम् ॥
अहङ्कारवशादापदहङ्काराद्दुराधयः ।
अहङ्कारवशादीहानाहङ्कारात्परीरिपः ॥
ममेति बध्यते जन्तु निर्ममेति विमुच्यते ।
यदा नाहं तदा मोक्षो यदाहं बन्धनं तदा ॥
नाहं ब्रह्मेति सङ्कल्पात्सुदृढान्मुच्यते मनः ।
सर्वं ब्रह्मेति सङ्कल्पात्सुदृढद्बध्यते मनः ॥
मुक्ताभिमानी मुक्तो हि बद्धो बद्धाभिमान्यपि ।

अनन्तस्यात्म तत्त्वस्य किं कथं केन बध्यते ॥
सर्वमेकं परंब्रह्म को मोक्षः का च बन्धता ।
अहमन्य इदं चान्यदिति भ्रान्तिं त्यजानघ ॥
नास्ति नास्ति जगत्सर्वं गुरुशिष्यादिकं नहि ।
न बन्धोऽस्ति न मोक्षोऽस्ति ब्रह्मैवास्ति निरामयम् ॥
स्वपौरुषैक साध्येन स्वेप्सिततत्याग रूपिणा ।
मनः प्रशममात्रेण विना नास्ति शुभा गतिः ॥
ज्ञेयवस्तु परित्यागे विलयं याति मानसम् ।
मानसे विलयं याते कैवल्यमवशिष्यते ॥
न शास्त्रेणापि गुरुणा दृश्यते परमेश्वरः ।
दृश्यते स्वात्मनैवात्मा स्वयासत्वस्थया धिया ॥
असङ्कल्प न शस्त्रेण छिन्नं चित्तमिदं यदा ।
सर्वं सर्वगतं शान्तं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ॥
अहन्ताऽशेक्षते शान्तो भेद निष्पन्द चित्तता ।
अजडा या प्रचकति तत्स्वरूपमितीरितम् ॥
सन्तोऽतीतं न शुचन्ति भविष्यच्चिन्तयान्ति नो ।
वर्तमानं च गृह्णन्ति क्रमप्राप्तं सदानघ ॥
कामान् निष्कामरूपी संश्चरत्येक चरो मुनिः ।
स्वात्मनैव सदा तुष्टः स्वयं सर्वात्मना स्थितः ॥
ब्रह्मविज्ञान संपन्नः प्रतीतमखिलं जगत् ।
पश्यन्नपि सदानैव पश्यति स्वात्मनः पृथक् ॥
त्वमेवाहं न भेदोऽस्ति पूर्णत्वात्परमात्मनः ।
मह्यं तुभ्यमनन्ताय तुभ्यं मह्यं शिवात्मने ॥

THE GOSPEL OF ADVAITA

A SINGLE ripple passed over the eternally changeless sea of Universal Mind, and from that thought evolved a Universe, full of an infinite richness of minds, each with the same creative power in itself. So each Soul thought in turn, and from its thought appeared a world, wherein it seemed to be entrapped for countless ages of experience. Joys and sorrows filled those imagined worlds, births and deaths in ceaseless succession, success and failure, partings and reunions, loves and hates—all the marvellous pattern of our individual lives.

But all of this is only a lasting dream, the fantasy of a mind deluded into belief that it is independent, the variegated product of desire and repulsion, of idea and egoistic fancy! So long as the restless mind maintains its endless weaving of such fancies, so long must it

imagine itself to be a separate Soul enduring the uncertain joys and recurring miseries of birth and death in countless worlds of every kind. Our whole life is nothing but this pointless dream; when the Soul wakes into Eternity, all this dreaming vanishes and there is nothing but the ONE Infinite and Eternal SELF so long concealed from us by the mind's weaving of these fantasies.

Belief in the dream, relationship with or attachment to the shadows that make it up, this is our Bondage; and waking from the dream into the glorious Reality is our Liberation. To gain Release there is no complicated ritual to be performed, no herculean labour to be undertaken—the mind must simply stop its ceaseless thinking. Even a moment of real mental silence may avail to rend the curtain that hides Reality; the briefest interval between two thoughts is rich with the fullness of that Vision. We glimpse it daily when we enter the full repose of perfect sleep, or lose our petty ego in the swift joy of music, of a lovely sunset or the grace of playing kittens, the smile of a tiny child. We are no strangers to that ecstasy of Real Life, for it is our

natural state, wherein we are when undisturbed by restless thoughts. Yet it is not easy for us now after centuries of accumulated habit to put away completely the formulation of ideas about things—this is good, that is bad, this is his, I want that—and to dissociate ourselves entirely from everything but the SELF within, behind all phenomena. The effort demands our perseverance until it has strengthened the mind so far that it can dare be *still*. It is in that stillness we know GOD within and without, and so realize that as He alone exists we too are He.

Then all the childish fancies, the games of make-believe which have so long distracted us, fall away for ever. We step out in boundless gladness to the new Life, free from every imaginable limitation, acting spontaneously as inwardly guided by the GOD within to delight the GOD without. Death and birth are henceforth known to be unrelated to the real SELF; they lose all significance before the upsurging and limitless LIFE we realize to be eternal. Likes and dislikes, fears and desires vanish for ever when we see in everything a mere reflection of the ONE SELF equally revealed

in all that exists. To know oneself to be the ONE SELF—this is the aspiration, the final goal, the glorious Gospel of Advaita, which transforms the illusive mind of man into GOD manifest in endless bliss.

THE GOSPEL OF ADVAITA

PREFACE

Advaita (Monism) is not a philosophy; it is a vital Experience. He to whom that Experience comes has no idea of philosophising it, of trying to explain it to another; for him there is *no* other but only the ONE. Yet as he lives out his life 'down here', men ask him to share with them the knowledge which has so wonderfully irradiated his own life; and so he tries, feebly enough, to build a system on that Experience—which is like trying to build a house on the back of a flying bird.

It is an 'experience', but there is no 'experiencer'; there is only a flowing Light, an endless chord of exquisite Music. There is an Abyss of radiance, a pulsing Life—which is known at once, without words, to surround and permeate all things that are. Lost in adoring wonder at the infinite Beauty felt as everywhere, the soul in that Experience can say to itself only in a flash of Silence, "This is GOD!" For that knowledge no philosophy, no book-learning is needed; it relies on no Scripture, however holy, however ancient; it IS, and in itself it bears the proof of its own inherent perfection.

No desire to speak of it arises,[1] though the tongue may leap in exultation and ecstatic songs may flow forth as from the lips of Swami Rama Tirtha or Richard Rolle; or else the heart may be drowned in a silent adoring love. It is the supernal TAO, the HARMONY whereon the universe is based, the LAW of Righteousness which holds the rolling worlds in its maternal arms.

None can give that Experience to another; it is the unearned 'gift of God' and dawns suddenly, swiftly, in the heart chosen by Him for it to manifest. Nor can anyone withhold himself from that tremendous glory when it is to dawn on him—any more than he can prevent the sun from rising in the eastern sky. Without warning it comes, laying upon the limbs its sweet restraining hand that they cannot move, upon the breath that it can neither enter nor come forth. Like the fires of the Caves of Kôr[2] it comes, as a hidden thunder, as a pillar of rolling light; it beautifies the world with its Divine glory for some dazzling moments, and then is gone again. But not for ever. The mysterious path it once travels is open again and again to its swift approach as the years go by—until it remains as a perpetual glory, wherein the Soul may bathe and be renewed in immortality and surpassing beauty. Therein

[1] In fact, as elsewhere stressed, there is a great danger in the indiscriminate preaching of this Truth; under its cover, men may practise many evil deeds—"I am eternally pure; sin runs off my back like water from a swan!" they say, and follow the evil light of their own devices.

[2] In H. Rider Haggard's romance '*She*', this allegory of the flames of Life ever burning in the caverns of the heart (*cor*) is found.

at last the Soul will dive, and be for ever lost to the futilities of our worldly life.

Of this Experience, of how those who knew it for themselves have tried in their kindness to speak of it in Earth's heavy words, this volume has to tell. The reader will be wise to remember on every page that words are but a poor symbol of what exists beyond their range of power; within each sentence there is an ocean of meaning for him to fathom if he can. Indeed, he will only understand all that this book has to say about the Experience of all-transcending ONENESS, when he himself has bathed in that immortal Flame—and in that Flame is consumed the very Ego which once sought for understanding, and remains only the Divinity which has always seen and known.

This is no work of scholarship, though the usual methods of scholars have been used; it is no dry philosophy woven out of dusty brains. It is a joyous exploration into the power of words to carry more than their own weight, a voyage of discovery into the intuition behind the all-creative human mind.

Above all, it is not a study of the 'philosophy' of Sri Adi-Sankarāchārya; I am certainly not the one to make or publish such a study. The only books all modern scholars admit as undoubtedly from his pen are his great Commentaries on the Central Scriptures of all 'Hindus'—the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, and the *Vedānta Sūtras*. And our Series does not include studies on any Commentaries, however learned or important, so I have entirely ignored them all. The books

here used and attributed to him are those minor works in which he may well have tried first to reflect a shadow of the Glory he had directly known—or they may be, as many now believe, attributed to his inspiration by pupils who followed after and sought to glorify their Master. All that does not matter to us in the least. Those works, especially the grand *Viveka Cūḍāmaṇi*, have been used in the text of this 'Gospel' because they help to throw direct light on the nature of the Experience, and on the spiritual state or practices which often facilitate its appearance in the Soul. Also because they have through the centuries inspired many to seek in themselves the fruition of that glory.

And so too with the choice of the Upanishads and Gitas I have used in this text. I do not enter into the question of their age or 'authenticity'; they are all numbered among the '108 Upanishads' and other Scriptures accepted by the orthodox as inspired. Some may have been written down by pupils of the great Advaita School to vindicate their Master's teachings; some may be from the direct experience of nameless Ṛshis in days before history, long handed down by word of mouth and written out in modern Sanskrit only a few centuries ago. All that is not our concern here, nor does it interest me as Editor of a Series planned to give the essence of the world's great Scriptures in a shape convenient for our modern world. Nor are we here concerned with the relative age of the original *Yoga Vasistha*, with its directness and reliance solely upon experience, and the work of Sri Sankaracharya; we may

safely leave such discussions to the experts. I have chosen certain Scriptures to build up the 'Gospel' text, solely because what they have to say seems to help to a little clearer understanding of the nature and value of that tremendous Experience whereof they treat—as indeed do all the Scriptures of the world, though rarely in such clear terms.

For myself, it were impossible to say how much I owe for what has here been written through me to the abiding delight of the inspiring Presence on many occasions of one of the very greatest Souls visible in out age—Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi. To know that there at Tiruvannamalai, a place on the map, not in any inaccessible and half-mythical valley by far Shigatse, but a bare 150 miles from Madras and a mile or so from the railway line, was one whom I came in time to know for a veritable 'Master', an 'Adept', a 'Jivanmukta', free while yet alive among men—who can assess the precious value of that knowledge? Well, for years that priceless Treasure was in our reach, and even now He who showed His gentle, gracious, illuminating love to us through that human form, being omnipresent, is still in touch with us, can still overshadow and inspire us with His infinite wisdom and understanding. What little I have known of the Advaita I owe to Him who is the ONE Eternal, and also largely to the one so dear to those who long knew him as 'Bhagavan'.[1] At His feet, I a child of ignorance

[1] It were ungracious not here to acknowledge grateful to Sri Venkatarama Aiyar, whose able and willing

yet one with universal Wisdom, dare to lay the fruits of this labour. May Sri Bhagavan use its clumsy words and sentences as a means of showering His grace upon its readers—this is my prayer to Him.

made possible for me the few personal talks I had with Srī Bhagavan. I usually found it enough just to be in that marvellous Presence, diving as it were into an ocean of radiant Silence there. But at times points seemed to need elucidation from the Master, and then this good friend was always ready to help. I think it right also to thank the late Swami Niranjanananda, Sarvadhikari of the Ashram, for unfailing courtesy to me personally, which made repeated visits there both happy and of utmost value. Now that Bhagavan has 'passed on' to the Videhamukta stage, a Committee there gives every help to enquirers.

The usual thanks go also to Dr. G. Srinivasamurti, Honorary Director, and to the other authorities of the Adyar Library for their continued co-operation, and to our printers for their careful and attractive work.—D. G.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Sources of Knowledge

ANY religion or philosophy which would appeal to reasoning men must first ask itself on what sort evidence its teachings have been based. The logical dian mind has always been aware of this need, so we .d most books on any Indian philosophy begin by ιting its fundamental authorities.

In our own 'Gospel of Advaita', § 18 : 3, Sri .nkaracharya gives his sources in the following order: evelation, Perception, Tradition and Inference, and a ›se study of his method shows us this is in more or .s the order of their importance to him. Though ιsiṣṭha throws far more stress upon 'Perception', we ιy fairly take Sankara's order as typical of most lvaitins. We ourselves remain free, however, to ιmine with our own reason their relative value.

Revelation

By this is meant authoritative Scripture—by which Hindus primarily understand the *Vedas*, *Upanishads* least ten), the *Vedānta Sūtras* and the *Bhagavad-a*, most adding the *Bhāgavatam* or other *Purāṇa* or

Itihāsa, and any Scripture favoured by their personal Gurus.

The Hindu concept of inspiration varies between total verbal accuracy beyond the possibility of error, much as in the case of Christian Fundamentalists, and a belief that the teachings are true while the words may have been supplied by human scribes. The idea of an 'Eternal Veda', revealed in part from age to age according to man's needs and capacities, 'seen' by highly clairvoyant Ṛshis as Sanjaya saw and heard the *Gītā* given out on the battlefield, seems innate in the Indian mind. As in other lands, all Scriptures, at whatever period they may have been finally committed to writing, are attributed to some great name of the timeless past—who may, if we like, be deemed to have inspired them from the inner worlds. Thus the *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha* bears the name of Sri Rāma's great Teacher, though few scholars could agree that in its present form it is more than 2000 years old—while Sri Rama is put many millennia before that.

The historical 'authenticity' of a Scripture, therefore, matters very little to the Indian mind; whoever may have lent his hand for writing it down, it is confidently attributed to the Great Soul whose name it bears. Like the holiness of a relic or place of pilgrimage, its importance depends on the faith of countless devotees rather than on the opinion of the mere scholastic critic of its historical reliability. Which opinion, incidentally, changes so often and so radically that we may not blame the Hindu for a certain cautious-

scepticism towards his usually rather over-confident assertions.

Perhaps to meet the need of his own age, Sankara seems to have regarded an appeal to *S'ruti*, that is, to what the Ṛshis clairaudiently *heard* from Heaven with their own ears, as more or less final, especially when he could allege personal or general experience to support it. But where he mainly differs from Vasistha is in his clinging to 'Inference' or Argument, constructing an elaborate philosophy out of more or less convincing arguments based upon the Revelation. But the trouble with Scriptures, especially when they are so terse, so ambiguous, as for instance the *Vedanta Sutras*, is that they can be used as base for the most divergent theories —in each case with the most flawless logic and plausible confidence. Thus the most varying philosophies have been built in India on this same group of universally accepted Scriptures.

We find a custom in the Middle Ages, and earlier, of philosophers wandering over India in search of intellectual fame through public duels in controversy—wherein scholastic and verbal ingenuity, if not jugglery, counted far more than an honest search for the actual truth. As the penalty of defeat in such tournaments seems to have been usually the forcible conversion of the vanquished, victories like these do not confirm our faith in the truth of philosophies thus established.

But as controversy is not the aim of this Series, nor are we here in the least concerned with establishing one form of the Truth over another, we shall rather busy

ourselves with what the 'average' Advaitin has understood from his own accepted Scriptures, and leave mental gymnastics to those interested in them. The fact that the "mind is slayer of the real", the "creator of illusion", and that "all the Vedas are false" (GA 32 : 3) will often remind us that no Scriptures can ever be taken as absolute authority, but must always justify themselves before the bar of actual personal experience. Words cannot but distort the mental picture formed of the Ineffable; no words can describe a sunset or moonrise at sea to one born blind, and until Ecstasy has been actually experienced by the reader of any Scripture, it can only be a forest of words giving him no real idea of its nature.

Yet before the mariner's compass was invented sailors guided themselves over the seas by fickle stars, and until some faint experience of God has come to the aspirant he must, to some extent at least, rely upon the Scriptures which mark out, if only by negatives, the way along which experience may be had. Reading them with faith, with a certain mental surrender as if in the veritable presence of their holy author, the eager student may through spiritual books enter into real relationship with a Guru—which will immensely speed his steps towards the portal of the Path. Far be it from us to sow doubts, then, of the immense value of an inspired Scripture—at least until, by the grace of some Guru like its writer, the aspirant has been able for himself to "taste and see how sweet the Lord is".

2. Perception

"Experience teaches", and one who has himself tasted honey knows that it is sweet; he needs no learned treatise to assure him of the fact. Vasistha makes this the supreme test of truth (*pramāṇam*) and rarely, if ever, quotes or directly alludes to any Scripture in support of what he teaches. The whole of his great work claims to be based on personal knowledge, and in fact there is something in its tone which convinces the unbiased reader that his claim is just. He also insists that all he says may be proved by one who cares to test it for himself by his own experience. Nor is Sankara far behind him in stressing the overwhelming power of such a proof; indeed, at times he clinches an argument with the words "It is the common experience of all", after which even Scripture seems superfluous. We need no Revelation to tell us that the sun's heat is greater than the moon's, or that a tired man finds dreamless sleep most blissful.

And it happens that this is the one 'Proof' which most strongly appeals to the rather sceptical modern mind. We are not today convinced by appeal to Scripture when divorced from verifiable experience; even the best-known scientist's work is held in suspense until another equally well trained has confirmed it by independent research under strict scientific discipline. This surely is the difference between true rationalism, that is, commonsense devotion to truth, and blind superstition. No religion or philosophy can for all time stand on mere statements, which claim to come from God but cannot

be tested or proved by Man. Unless susceptible to proof by trained research, they may have value for the God who revealed them, but are certainly of very little use to the Man of this century, at all events!

But as the scientist demands a long and patient training before the student can prove his teacher's words for himself, so the philosopher rightly insists on a long and patient training for him who would examine the truth of a religion or philosophy. He states the results of his own research, and he tells us what we must do in our turn if we would ourselves see what he has seen. Every wise system therefore prescribes the Path to Truth—not to impose a discipline or to dope the people, but to help them find the Truth for themselves. And it is only what we find for ourselves that is really ours for all eternity.

3. Tradition

And herein lies our Third Means of 'Proof'—the traditional course of conduct, the ethical line, the ancient rites and disciplines of mind and body which enabled Great Souls in the past so to refine their inner senses that they could directly perceive the Truth. And by following their example, we too are certain to reach their Goal. If we take the Calcutta road and go on walking, it is certain we shall in time come to Calcutta; no miracle will land us in Bombay or Madras instead. If we patiently follow the practices handed down to us by our predecessors, we shall certainly in due time become like them and achieve what they achieved.

The only condition here is that we must be sure we are on the road to Calcutta. If our leader is blind, both he and we will fall into the ditch. If the tradition which comes to us actually started with ignorant men, and not with real Knowers of the Truth, it is worse than useless and must be firmly discarded if we would reach our Goal. Many traditions surviving in the world today—for instance the peculiar concept of Caste found here and there in India—are obviously corruptions of what was once a wise and politic arrangement for good social order. But so long as our life is disgraced by cruel and senseless denials of the dignity of *every* human being, as unqualifiedly an 'incarnation' of the Divine, so long is the glory of the Vedānta insulted and India's soul stained with crime. Yet it is for India herself to wash away that stain; no other can help at all to free her from it until she feels in herself its utter irrelevance before the absolute ONENESS which her noblest saints and books declare.

4. Inference

Being really little more than Argument, this is rightly placed last by Sankara. Yet it has a certain place in establishing the details of a truth. If a sure basis is absolutely established by Experience and is also in agreement with recognised Scripture—which is in fact really the experience of Saints and Sages, partially expressed through the distorting medium of words—one does not err in deducing from that certain truth a reasonable conclusion. The danger here is

lest we build on shaky foundations, or erect upon too narrow a base the ponderous walls of a mighty citadel.

Using this 'Proof', in fact, we must constantly check ourselves from going beyond our premisses, as many Christians did when on the fact of Hell they constructed the wicked blasphemy of souls being eternally lost therein —turning an obvious metaphor and mistranslation into a statement of plain fact. Some Advaitins have also reduced their glorious Truth to a like exaggeration when speaking of the 'unreality' of the 'world'. We must remember at all times that Truth is found in the Silence, and *no* words can describe it so that misunderstanding is impossible. Indeed, most of what we know about the 'higher life' can best be expressed through paradox: God both is and is not, and at the same time neither is nor is not, identical with the Individual Soul.

Perhaps the best advice for the truth-seeker lies in our GA 30 : 1, where Vasistha warns us against blindly accepting what even God Himself may assert in His own Person, while we should listen with respectful attention to a child's opinion—provided it offend not against commonsense and decency. No one has said the last word on anything, for the mind's activity is ceaseless and Truth is infinite. Let us not in our egoistic personal loyalties to *any* teacher, however great his name, stray from this advice; we shall then be better able to know for ourselves the Truth and perhaps to help another to see it for himself in turn.

2. The Supreme Advaitin : Sankara

1. The Date of Sankaracharya

Though Western scholars, followed by some Indian imitators, have with meticulous accuracy fixed the period of this mighty Philosopher at A.D. 788-820, we cannot in fact be so sure of any date ; Bhāshyāchārya gives strong reasons for preferring the centuries between A.D. 350 and about 590. He relies largely on allusions to Srughna (a city already ruined at Hiouen-Thsang's visit about A.D. 629-645), Pātaliputra (washed away in A.D. 750 and rebuilt only in 1541), and the crowning of a contemporary Pūrṇavarma, who reigned about A.D. 590. The dates of earlier writers referred to by Sankara in his certainly genuine works suggest a period not too long after A.D. 350.

If we accept the European date, which mostly relies on repeated and confident assertion, we are left to wonder what evidence there is of a lifetime of precisely *32* years, beyond the traditions of that life which the same scholars reject as largely mythical. There is a rather questionable leaflet from Belgaum, of later than the 12th century, on which this later date seems to depend more than its quality justifies, for it remarks that Madhvacharya was the son of the demon Madhu, slain by Sri Kṛishna—which is hardly likely to be historical !

The three great Lives, by Anandagiri, Chitsukhacharya and Madhvacharya, are all late, probably none of them earlier than 13th century, though they may well enshrine true traditions handed down by the original

disciples many centuries earlier. I have frankly used them here, for want of earlier evidence ; their story thus harmonised does not seem too improbable for such a man as Sankara certainly must have been.

Sri T. S. N. Sastri tries to throw back the Sage to B.C. 500--and the Buddha to B.C, 1800!—but this cannot for a moment claim belief. It relies on the alleged date of the Harsha Era of Nepal as B.C. 338 instead of A.D. 606, and on the generally reckless identification of persons with slightly similar names—for which many Western scholars may also have to be blamed. Can any one in India compute just how many 'Ramaswamy's' may be living today?

Let us leave it at that, then; to be honest, we must, as with so many other Indian dates, say frankly we do not know when Sankara lived ; but we may make bold to add that it seems to have been somewhere between A.D. 350 and 800.

2. Sankara's Birth and Childhood

The story runs that Sivaguru, son of Vidyadhiraja, a pious Brahmin of Kaipalle, adjoining the village of Kālaḍi on the Churni River near the modern Alwaye in Kerala, and his wife Aryamba had no child until old age. Then the old man was asked to choose between many ordinary sons and one who should not live long but should have great knowledge and merit; he chose the latter. On the fifth day of the bright half of Vaisakh (May) the son was born, and he received the holy name of Sankara.

He was a beautiful child, and so bright mentally that at the age of *three* they taught him his letters, and at *five* initiated him into the Vedas. He is said to have been even then the teacher of some of his co-pupils and to have written for them two spiritual treatises. When he was *six* (or *eight*), his aged father died, and we are given a glimpse of his love for his mother in the story that he miraculously helped her work by changing the course of the river to near her house (cf. GMC 16, 18). One day he was fording that same river when a crocodile caught him by the leg; he used this circumstance to gain his mother's blessing for his desire to become a *sannyāsi*—the crocodile at once released him! He then promised his mother that when she needed her son to perform funeral rites, he would come to her. We learn that so attractive was he that there had already been several marriage proposals for him from suitable families.

At *nine* the little boy set out from home, already a nominal *sannyāsi*; on his way north he was joined at Gokarana by his old schoolmate Chitsukha, and the two friends went together to the banks of the Narmada. Here Sankara became a disciple of the famous Govinda Bhagavadpāda (pupil of Gauḍapāda, and he of Suka, and *he* of the Bādarāyaṇa who wrote the *Vedānta Sutras*). As a sort of matriculation thesis the little boy offered his Guru the five couplets of *Nirvāṇapanchakam*, and as we are told God Nārāyana had already spoken to Govinda of the great pupil who would come to him, he was welcomed with open arms and formally initiated into *sannyāsa*.

Sankara was now *ten*, and for the next ten years or so seems to have studied under his Guru, who acquainted him with Gaudapāda's famous *Kārikās* on the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad*—these delighted him immensely. During these early days Sankara wrote the *Viveka Chūḍamani* and the *Prātasmaraṇa*, we are told. To please him, his Guru took him to the Himalayas to meet Gaudapāda himself at Badrinath.

3. Mystic Experiences

The great man, Sankara's Guru's Guru, took a liking to the brilliant youth, and for four years generously taught him all he knew; during these years Sankara wrote several more short treatises, including his own Commentary on the *Karikas*. Gaudapāda, approving this, then commissioned him to write Commentaries on three groups of Scripture, and this he eventually did—his great life-work.

Meanwhile he was taken (whether in or out of the body) to Mt. Kailasa in Tibet, to meet Suka and Badarayana. These approved his treatises and ordered him to preach the Advaita doctrine at Banaras (Kasi). Then, after these great human Teachers had disappeared, came a vision of God as Dakshinamurti, by whom Sankara was led to Siva's palace on the summit of the great mountain; by the Lord's grace he there entered into ecstasy and became a Liberated Soul, an Adept or Master.

Returning to the normal world, he came down to Gangotri, the holy source of the R. Ganga, where he

rejoined his old friend Chitsukha and initiated him as a pupil. The two visited Govinda, Sankara's own Guru, and were then on the way to Banaras when news came that his aged mother, Aryamba, was on her death-bed.

4. The Visit to Kaladi

Now we remember Sankara had promised his mother to be with her at the last and to do for her all that customary ritual demanded from a son. He hurried off at once, and arrived in time. Having failed to impress the old lady with his subtle and abstruse Advaita, he spoke with her of devotion, first to Siva and then to her more-beloved Krishna, writing for her sake eight verses in glory of that Divine Form. She died happily in his arms, and in spite of the neighbours' criticism when they saw him prostrating to, embracing, and with his own hands cremating his mother's body,[1] he fulfilled his promises and carried out all the usual rites a mother expects from her son.

Immediately after this incident, a messenger named Sarardara summoned him hurriedly to see his dying Guru, who had returned to Amarakānta in Middle India. Receiving Govinda's blessing as the chosen spiritual heir, Sankara assumed the guidance of his Guru's many pupils, and also initiated Sanandana, giving him the *Ātmabodha* as his spiritual textbook.

[1] A *sannyāsi* has given up all human relationships and is as though already dead to the world. Cf. Sankara's attitude with that of Sri Gauranga.

5. Banaras and Prayag

He then proceeded to Banaras, then as now the meeting-place of scholars, saints and sages. Here he seems to have lived for several years, busy in writing his great Commentaries on the *Thousand Names of Vishnu*, the *Ten Upanishads*, the *Gita*, and finally the *Vedanta Sutras*. He often visited Badrinath during this period, and is said to have obtained the approval of Badarayana himself for his Commentary on the Sutras; the interview may well have taken place on some 'inner plane'.

One day Sankara was returning from the bathing-steps at Banaras when an outcast went by with his dogs. Sankara's disciples, including Padmapada their leader, shouted for the man to make way lest their Guru's bath be rendered useless by fresh defilement. The outcast turned to Sankara himself and mildly asked, "Is this the sort of Vedanta you are teaching? Have you not yet realized the ONE SELF in all?" Sankara then understood the encounter was arranged by God Himself

At the age of perhaps *twenty-five*, he moved on to Prayāg (Allahabad), where he took up his abode at the holy Ashram of the ancient Sage Bharadwaj, almost opposite the modern home of Jawarharlal Nehru. Here he began to preach every morning in public; at midday he bathed with his disciples at the Sangam where Ganga meets Yamuna; the afternoon was devoted to questions and discussions on philosophy and the meaning of the Scriptures (cf. GA 49 : 2). Many pupils and enquirers began to come to him from all over India.

At the foot of the Immortal Tree (*Akṣayavaṭ*) now surrounded by the Fort, he cured of leprosy and converted Udanka, who became one of his chief disciples. At the village of Jhūnsi, across the river, he converted the famous ritualist Prabhākarāchārya, with all his pupils; he also got Prithvidhara, the chief convert's silent son, to speak, made him his pupil, and gave him the name Hastāmalaka, after the poem with which the long silence was broken. He returned home to the Ashram in triumphal procession.

At Kausāmbi he is said to have raised from the dead an only son by telling the sorrowing parents that only God has all power. He was resting under a tree at the Sangam when news came that the famous apostle of Ritualism, Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, was about to cremate himself alive. He hastened to the spot, but at that time Bhatta was not in the mood to argue on philosophy and referred him to Mandana Misra, his brother-in-law, instead.

6. Sankara becomes the Supreme Sage

Sankara went to Mahismati in Magadha, and there met Misra in controversy. As his arguments were overthrown, Mandana was reluctantly forced to embrace *sannyāsa*, but his wife Bhārati tried to prevent this by challenging Sankara in Sex-knowledge, the one field whereof he had no experience. She maintained that as a wife is part of her husband, until she was answered her husband had not really been defeated. This was when, we are told—and our knowledge of psychic science

is not yet so complete that we can summarily reject the tale—Sankara, to answer her objections, entered the body of the newly-dead King Amarula, and for some time lived a householder's life in the palace. The stay there was rather suddenly ended when his own body, lying in trance, was about to be cremated as a corpse! When he returned to Misra's palace, he was able to answer Bharati's questions about sex, and so completed his victory. He then went to Kashmir, where he was proclaimed as *Sarvajña*, that is, Omniscient.

7. Apostolic Tours

Sankara then set out for a long tour through the Dekkan, where he converted the dog-worshipping devotees of Mallari; he offered his own head as a sacrifice to the Kapālika thugs, but at the last moment was rescued by Padmapada. At the source of the Tangabhadra he founded the *Sringeri* Math and Temple, with the help of Virasena the local King. Placing the former Mandana Misra, now known as Sures'warāchārya, and his talented wife Bharati, in charge here, he continued his journey. He had wanted Misra to gloss his own Commentaries, but the other disciples insisted on Padmapada doing the work—to which he rather reluctantly consented while arranging that Misra comment at least on his *Upanishad-Bhashya*. Padmapada's gloss is said to have been burned by his uncle during a visit to Rames'waram; it is lost any way.

From Sringeri Sankara went to *Puri* on the Orissa coast, where he founded the Govardhana Math, leaving

it in Padmapada's charge. In the Tamil land he converted the Sākta worshippers of the Mother-Goddess at Kānchī (Conjeevaram), and also won over the Kings of Chola and Pandya, that is, most of the South, to Advaita teachings. After a visit to Sringeri, he went through Berar to Ujjain, and there put an end to the Bhairava blood-sacrifices. Next he went to *Dwāraka*, Sri Krishna's capital in Gujerat, and founded the Sārada Math there; this he put under Hastāmalaka, whom he had converted at Jhunsi.

Proceeding along the Ganga valley, he went up to Kashmir, and then to Kāmarūp (Gauhati) in Assam, where he overcame in controversy the famous Sākta teacher Abhinava Gupta. This man is said to have tried to murder him by witchcraft, but his life was saved —by Padmapada, we are told. In a final visit to Badrinath he rebuilt the ancient Temple, installed the old Image which had been thrown by Jains into the Alaknanda River, and discovered the hot springs to help future pilgrims to this very cold plāce, more than 10,000 feet above the sea. A little lower down, at *Joshimath* (6,106 ft.) he founded his fourth and last monastery, the Jyoti Math, over which he set his pupil Totakāchārya.

By some Sankara is said to have died at Kedarnath, a Saiva shrine in the Himalayas, but by others this is said to have happened at Kānchi near Madras, where he is believed to have been buried under his own statue in the Kāmākshi Temple. To me personally this seems part of the attempt to win for the east coast this Great Soul, like the tale that he was born at Chidambaram.

Both parties agree that his death occurred at the early age of *thirty-two*, though some are found to dispute even this.

8. His Doctrines

Sankara gave the Scriptures great importance; writing on the *Taittiriyopanishad*, he says: "Scripture is our source of knowledge in matters transcending the senses." Time and Space are equally unreal, and when they disappear it is found that all selves merge in one. Related to His creative power, God (Brahman) assumes a new character as Īs'wara (the *Saguṇa-Brahman*) or the Lord. The Soul can be freed from illusion's veil by denying in turn the five bodies assumed for its manifestation. In his note, Sitanath Tattva-bushan insists that Sankara shows that "absolute liberation does not imply an utter annihilation of difference" (p. 96), for even Sri Krishna saw differences as between Kurus and Pāṇḍavas, and that "absolutely liberated souls may reincarnate themselves . . . for the object of . . . liberating those who are still in bondage" (pp. 96-97). Sankara was opposed to all kinds of activity once the mind was purified, and totally condemned family life as opposed to spirituality—wherein he differs from Vasistha and almost every other spiritual teacher in the world. He admits however that such motiveless acts as Janaka's and Sri Krishna's—and his own on preaching tours?—did not involve *karma* and were not really in that sense 'activities' at all.

Some have held that Sankara came to modify and correct the exaggerations of Buddhism; what he in turn

taught was exaggerated by some until Advaita came to be called by many 'crypto-Buddhism', and a form of atheism. But it seems almost impossible for one who reads at all events his minor works—and it is most unlikely the great Commentator never left anything quite original of his own and never tried his own hand at clearly stating what he had so vividly realised—to think of his Advaita as any kind of sterile Atheism. Rather he merits the high place of a Prophet, whose teaching was the holy truth that God is *really* everywhere, not as many theologians pretend more in one place than another—but *everywhere*, because nothing else can possibly exist save Himself. By also outlining in clear terms the spiritual Path to the highest Truth, Sankara establishes his doctrine as in the fullest sense a Religion, which he has adorned with one of the greatest philosophies ever conceived by man.

3. An Advaita Philosophy: Vasistha

1. The Book Yoga-Vasistha

One of India's greatest Scriptures and one of the masterpieces of Sanskrit literature, neglected as it has so long been by the West, comes to us from some dim antiquity—probably, as Atreya has shown on mostly internal evidence, earlier than Sankara's own. Nor can we say anything whatever about its author, who is veiled by the great name of a Maharshi of old.

Swami Rama Tirth, one of the greatest Advaitins of our century, says of it (*In Woods of God-Realizat* III, p. 295): "One of the greatest books, and the

wonderful, according to me, ever written under the sun, is *Yoga-Vasistha*, which nobody on earth can read without realizing God-consciousness." To this a Hindi translator, Lala Baijnath, adds in his Introduction (II, p. 7): "By the study of this work alone, even the most passionate and worldly-minded will become dispassionate and will gradually realise peace within." It is certain that even to read an English translation of its abbreviated form is to dive into the peace and power always emanating from the person of a Realised Soul and to be bathed in an awareness that here is Truth indeed.

Dr. Atreya shows that the original work must date from about A.D. 480, as shown by internal evidences in relation to Nāgārjuna's Mahayana, to Vasubandhu (cir. 420 A.D.), and because its own Parts 3 and 6 relate to conditions in India like those [illegible] when the Guptas fell. It is clearly the source of several Minor Upanishads, such as *Akshi*, *Mahā* and *Varāha*, and influenced others like the *Tejobindu*, *Amṛtabindu* and *Yogas'ikha* Upanishads. Whether Sankara himself was acquainted with it, or it was a popularisation of Sankara's Advaita from a modified viewpoint, is a question on which I am qualified to give no opinion, but I can refer to Atreya's arguments for the priority of this great work with all respect; they certainly deserve careful consideration by the unbiased scholar.

Its form, unsystematic and unordered, blending philosophic teachings with stories, whereof most seem frankly fictitious, makes it hard to study as a textbook of philosophy. Atreya certainly did good service to the

history of human thought by putting the teachings into systematic order and omitting the stories. The book claims to derive solely from God Himself—that is, to be direct experience, and the atmosphere breathed out from every page fully justifies this claim.

A complete independence of all Scriptural 'proofs', a freedom from such technical terms as Sankara used, its primitive form of the Advaita teaching, its total freedom from polemic or controversial comparisons with other systems of thought, its resemblance rather to Gaudapada's *Karikas*—are further evidences alleged by Atreya to prove its great antiquity. Its broad tolerance and its clear teaching that many ways lead to the same goal, make it specially attractive to the modern cultured mind, which hates bigotry and regards it as proof of immaturity and ignorance.[1]

2. Preliminaries to Philosophy[2]

a. Preliminaries: The bondage of ceaseless desires makes life a misery to the wise ; it is caused by ignorance

[1] Atreya thus renders GYV 6b . 38 : 4 and 3 . 96 : 51-53 : " All these various doctrines arising at different times and in different countries, however, lead to the same Supreme Truth, like the many different paths leading travellers from different places to the same city . . It is ignorance of the absolute Truth and misunderstanding of the various doctrines that cause their followers to quarrel with one another with bitter animosity. They consider their own particular dogmas to be the best, as every traveller may think, though wrongly, his own path to be the only and the best path " Yet GYV 6b . 130 : 2 warns us that each traveller should keep to the end on his own path.

[2] This outline has been prepared from summarised notes I while studying Dr. B. L. Atreya's " The Philosophy of the Vasistha ", Adyar, 1936. In general it follows the sch his book.

of God, the One Self, and can be removed by a steady effort towards Self-Knowledge. The essential qualifications for this are: (i) Calmness, (ii) Self-Control and Kindness, (iii) unshaken Contentment, (iv) Good Company or a Guru, and (v) Research into the real nature of the self.

The only Means to Knowledge is the personal experience of God through a mature and purified intuition, though hints conveyed through analogy and simile may aid.

3. The Supreme

a. Absolute Reality: The source, medium and end of all, which is not other than Himself; all-inclusive, and thus ineffable, negative, and yet knowable through experience. All-inclusive, and so neither One nor Many, neither Being nor Non-Being, but both; for either taken alone is unreal, and He is beyond *all* pairs of opposites —Light and Dark, Good and Evil, Spirit and Matter, Self and Not-Self, etc. Thus is He called 'Unqualified' (*nirguṇa*).

b. Absolute Standpoint: In God all qualities are neutralised by their opposites, for He is homogeneous, simple, indivisible. By giving up the finite and being transmuted into the Infinite, replacing ignorance with knowledge, the Soul experiences God. The world then vanishes—for being unreal and non-existent in itself it cannot be destroyed, it simply merges into Reality. Being everywhere and all things, God cannot really create, for nothing is outside Himself on which He could

act. So He is not the Cause of the worlds, nor their 'Seed', being the Formless Void. The worlds are dreams of the seer, perceived as a sculptor sees his coming statue latent in the marble.

c. Cosmic Mind: God spontaneously thinks of Himself as some other, and at once becomes that 'other', the Soul. This is His 'play', and it has no motive, nor is it bound by any previous act of His. Within the Absolute manifests the ever-present creative power (*māyā-s'akti*), and the Universe appears. Pure Mind plays with Thought, which objectifies as the real or Cosmic World.

d. Creative Power: It is futile to call Creation an illusion, for even illusion, being a fact, must be explained. This is done by showing that creative power was always latent in the Absolute Unity as one of Its infinite potencies. " God is not a mere abstract Unity of simple Consciousness, but an almighty creative Being." Nature is to God as the non-living web is to the living spider. they are one Unit in two aspects, static and kinetic; There can be no awareness without the vibratory force of *s'akti*, which is in continuous motion till stilled in contact with the eternally quiescent S'iva.

4. The Mind-World

a. The Mind: This is God's creative power of thought, its imaginations always tending to objectivity as Soul, ego, body and world—each to express the former. The number of such Souls is infinite and all arise in God.

b. The World: Every unit-Soul in the World of Cosmic Mind is itself creatively imagining its own individual world, and every atom contains a world thus imagined by some focal point in 'Cosmic Mind', which can be perceived only by that individual mind, or focal point, itself. Each of these worlds disappears with the mind that fancied it, and at the end of the age *all* vanish back into Cosmic Mind. God fixed the fundamental laws of Nature at the beginning, so that Souls could progress; but as Souls are themselves points of that Cosmic Mind of God they can modify those laws.

c. Thought-Power: Mind can do all things, fashioning whatever it imagines and wills; thus the world it sees is the direct product of its own activity, and can be modified as it desires. Our limitations arise from our own ideas and vanish the moment we so resolve. So the Soul can be what it wills to be, and sees all things as it thinks they are. Only a man's thoughts about them can affect him in any way, and every wish or passing thought has some time to be realised. What we see in our [illegible] now is what we have willed in the past, and we can change it *now* by an effort of strong will.

d. Imaginism: As only identities can come into real relation, the subject and the object must be one, the underlying Universal Consciousness, or Cosmic Mind. This 'outer' life is really like a dream, as will be known when it ends. It exists only as a mental projection, and all its features like Time and Space depend solely on the mind and its senses. Even the physical body is

thought-born, everything being an image arising and subsiding in the mind. The real World is that imagined by God's Cosmic Mind, we see reflected distortions of this and call them real.

5. The Oneness of All

a. Manifestation: God manifests through mind, an aspect of Absolute Consciousness and ever latent therein, as white light contains the various colours. Manifestation is spontaneous, the world arising before mind as light before a lamp or heat before a fire. Because God *is*, the world naturally appears. Nor is His Being in the least affected by this appearance, as a man is unaffected by his shadow.

b. Identity with all: As waves, spray, cloud, rain, steam, pools, ice are all water only, so is everything nothing but God, and Nature is only the Self ; as winds are only air in motion, so the world is not different from God or the Soul.

c. Realms of Appearance: Nothing is *real* but what is eternal, without beginning and without end. But "an absolutely unreal thing can never exist", so our world is an 'appearance' only. "The unreal cannot be experienced", so all we see and feel are 'false', but they are neither 'real' nor 'unreal'; they are like a dream or vision, which can be experienced, and are real enough while they last.

6. The Personal Self

a. The Four States: The same Self acts in all four states—Waking, Dream, Sleep and Pure Being, the

Fourth. These correspond to the 'planes' of being, wherein life alternates with death for every 'Soul'.

b. Death: Disease stops the flow of vital forces (*prāṇa*), the body gets restless, breathing stops, the senses perish, the Soul, with all his memories and desires and beliefs, comes out to roam freely in the air. He finds himself almost at once in a new world of Time and Space, much like our own, and equally moulded by his own ideas, wishes and fears.

c. Life after Death: After a brief sleep or rest, the Soul seems to be awake in this new world, using now his subtle (*Sūkṣma*) body, which to him seems as solid as the old physical body. His former expectations appear in front of him, so that the worshipper of Vishnu finds himself among *Vishnu-dūtas*, the ritualist looks for the subtle food of *piṇḍa* offered by the survivors on his behalf, and the Christian finds God's Mother or the Angels. They imagine a judgment on their conduct and character, and then the 'righteous' enter Paradise or the celestial realms such as they have been taught to expect, and there enjoy heavenly delights for ages. The 'wicked' fall into the miseries of hell, where they find themselves tormented by 'demons' with tails and fiery tongues, if unluckily led to believe in such monstrosities. Both groups believe their experiences to be the result of their own acts, good or evil—and so in a sense they really are, for thought is the most powerful of actions. At last the idea of 'rebirth' comes into their minds; then they soon find themselves back 'in' physical bodies on the earth. The whole is a drama played out in their

own minds; who can say what the reality is? For none can see anything save through the mind, until that distorting mirror breaks and God alone is known as the One Reality.

7. The Spiritual Path

a. Psychic Powers: This Philosophy was built on experiences realized through inner powers attained by yoga; we can come in touch with the highest Beings by refining and strengthening the mind and will, through affirmation of their innate omnipotence. From them we can learn of the Truth.

b. The Home of Happiness: Even a flood in a mirage river cannot quench one man's thirst, so all the pleasures of the imagined 'world' are futile and end in disgust. Desires for objects are pain, obtaining them is brief pleasure, the idea of losing them again is fear; real and lasting happiness lies in the absence of desire, and when the mind is still, at rest, the bliss of the Absolute Self is felt in everything.

c. Bondage and Liberation: Intense desire for objects, forgetting of the real self, egoism, and self-limitation are Bondage; the freedom from these is Liberation. It may be gained by Affirmation and Practice: "one may be free the very moment one can give up everything and remain desireless". This requires neither the presence nor the absence of a 'solid' body. Then the latent desires have fallen like rotten fruits from a tree which buds forth new leaves. These changes are, of course, really illusory, the Self being in fact always free.

d. Means of Liberation: Primarily Self-Knowledge, for all else leads only to the fleeting heavens. Man is his own master and rules his own destiny, so he need not look for anything to another; everything comes from his own effort and actions. God is 'in' him, the awareness of Bliss being hidden by clouds of egoism; whatever comes of joy or pain, the wise always thinks of Him. The worship of outer gods is only to purify the mind, and outer renunciation is worth little. Study of Scripture, Good Company, and Noble Deeds help the mind to contemplate always the hidden Self.

e. Practical Realisation: Mere book-knowledge or intellectual reasoning is worse than ignorance until it is lived—then it becomes Yoga in three forms: (1) The *Constant Affirmation* of the One Reality till all else fades away and God alone shines forth; (2) The *Control of Life-Forces*, which are mind's physical aspect; this quickly brings the mind to rest; (3) The *Inhibition of the Mind* by stopping its resort to ego and the world, and causing it to rest in the Infinite. There are ten ways to do this: (*a*) realising the mind is unreal; (*b*) neutralising old ideas with new and opposite ideas; (*c*) distaste for objects as unreal and futile, yet not to be shunned as being also God; (*d*) eradicating Ego by realising we are equally the 'non-self', and so cultivating 'Cosmic Consciousness'; (*e*) indifference to actions and comforts of the body; (*f*) equal vision towards everything; for none are good or bad, foe or friend, all alike are only God; (*g*) mental withdrawal from personal activity with motive; (*h*) mental renouncing

of all things, realising all are already the Self, and so dropping the separativeness of mind; (*i*) ecstatic merging in the Reality seen everywhere in and out.

f. The Seven Stages: as described in our GA 48-56. The Fourth Stage is also called *Vilāpani*, "weeping (for Reality)", the Fifth is *S'uddhasamvinmayā*, "where pure bliss is realised", and the Sixth is *S*[illegible], "being merged into one's own consciousness", a blissful waking sleep.

8. The Liberated One

a. Liberation; This is the blissful experience of egoless Cosmic Consciousness, and may be touched whenever the narrow personality is forgotten or transcended, and on the cessation of sleep. Once tasted, it can never be forgotten, though no words can describe it. The soul cries, "I am happy everywhere; I enjoy everywhere; as I have no desire bliss is everywhere for me!" (GYV 6a : 107 : 27)

b. The Free Soul: Always blissful, his face shines with inner beauty, his conduct pleases all and makes everyone his friend. He seeks nothing, avoids nothing, but "enjoys what he has"; he is no ascetic, for the body too is God, a pleasure-garden, though the mind never dwells on it. All his acts are natural, spontaneous; his attitude differs from the ordinary in that he has no motive. His desires are reflex and automatic, being at once spontaneously met; he may or may not long continue as a 'separate' individual, though he has already entered into the Eternal and Infinite Being.

c. *Freedom from Karma*: We experience a world so long as we consciously or unconsciously will to experience it; and its nature exactly agrees with our deserts, desires and beliefs. The real action is this 'willing' or mental movement; 'karma' continues till the 'willing' ceases. Any action without 'willing' does not bind, that is, unless the personality seeks some results; but even a mere thought not acted on produces its binding effects. The Free may choose to live in the world to help it, or they may not; though they will always act with perfect rightness, there is no *duty* for them. They still think and act, but impersonally, so they are not bound by what they do.

9. Conclusion

Such, in barest outline, more or less as described by Dr. Atreya in his valuable work, is the Philosophy of Vasistha. It is a system of pure Advaita, yet free from certain defects in the Advaita more commonly described. And what is more, recent advances in Western Science, physical and psychic, definitely tend to support its general pattern. I believe, as his contribution comes to be better known, we shall hear more and more of Vasistha, to the enrichment of human thought in our own day of confusion and perplexity.

4. A Modern View of the Self

1. What is the Self?

In his life of Père Lacordaire, M. V. Woodgate reports him as saying: "A little philosophy draws us

from religion, but a great deal of it brings us back again", and the saying represents the most modern spirit in the West of a reaction from the arrogant materialism of some years ago. A sceptical student of the Christian Gospels, rejecting the orthodox importance given the 'Atonement' dogma, writes: "The religion of the future will either be a belief in the divine nature of the self, or it will be nothing" (Arthur Drews: *Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus*, p. 307). Away back in ancient Greece the immortal formula for religious and philosophic enquiry was "Know yourself", and that is still the core of modern scientific research into life's meaning.

What is the 'self'? Is it this childish, immature, ambitious, unbalanced, mortal mind, which so quickly lapses from its ideals into lust and cruelty? Or is it something hidden by that preposterous puppet, something grand and divine, from which alone such ideals can have come? One of the best of psychologists, Gerhard Adler, tells us (*Studies in Analytical Psychology*, p. 170) that a true religious experience "is the surrender and the extinction of the individual soul as nearly as it can be without complete and final extinction".

In his *Rational Mysticism* (p. 367), Kingsland says: "We are already one with the Absolute, and our quest is not for something which we do not possess, but simply a self-realization," while in *The Personality of Man* (pp. 158, 199, 284) G. N. M. Tyrrell sums it up: "The personality is a multiplicity in unity of a kind

which it is almost impossible to express in words. . . . What selfhood is—on what characteristics it depends—is probably beyond the capacity of our minds to grasp. . . . From the nature of the personality of man springs the possibility of the mystical divine union, the promise of a limitless inheritance, and the hope that in literal truth 'this mortal shall put on immortality'." J. Krishnamurti (*Experience and Conduct*, pp. 7-9) writes: "The ultimate purpose of individual existence is to realise pure being in which there is no separation, which is the realisation of the whole. The fulfilment of man's destiny is to *be* the totality. . . . It is not a question of losing yourself in the Absolute, but that you, by growth, by continual conflict, by adjustment, shall become the whole . . . without object or subject—which is pure life."

With these example citations let us proceed to study a few elements in the modern psychological view of that self, that personality, which seeks to be the whole.

2. The Waking Self

It is now certain that Man is not just what he is aware of in himself or is able to show to others. In *Psychology and Religion*, p. 99, Dr. Carl G. Jung writes: "Modern research has acquainted us with the fact that an individual consciousness is based upon and surrounded by an indefinitely extended unconscious psyche; we needs must revise our somewhat old-fashioned prejudice that man is his consciousness"—a prejudice which ruled the West so long as consciousness

was deemed to inhere in the physical brain as its 'secretion', and to perish with it.

Indeed, what one is aware of at any moment is a microscopic fragment of the whole self. Some elements in the unknown portion *can* be brought up more or less at will, through memory; this is called the 'Fore-Conscious' and it plays a vast share in our daily life. Other elements *cannot* be brought up through any effort of the will, but can be glimpsed through dreams, hypnotic and certain psychic states, through automatic writing and drawing, and through 'grace' in certain religious stages of Prayer. This is properly called the 'Unconscious State', whence rise many neurotic disturbances in those whose past life has not been happy and free from repression. In it lie buried our frustrated desires, thoughts held by general or personal morality to be shameful, the memory of a freedom which properly belongs to the discarnate state—*and* an infinite wealth of spiritual treasure. It contains trends suitable to both adult and infantile ages, and also the emotions and ideas common in the childhood of the race, before we were so completely 'separated' from each other. So powerful is its influence upon our lives that we must agree with Dr. Coriat that true mental life is our wishing and not our outer activities, for the latter are often artificially modified by social rules which we dare not disobey.

This 'waking consciousness' of ours is usually said to consist of perception, feeling, thinking, knowing and acting.

a. Perception: It is common experience that no one perceives accurately even what is before his eyes. "All perception is of the nature of hallucination", says Charles Baudouin; we see in the world what we ourselves put out into the world. No man sees things as they really are, but as they appear through the coloured glasses of his own ideas. "Whatever is wrong in the world is in himself, and if he only learns to deal with his own shadow" (*i.e.*, lower nature) "he has done something real in the world," says Dr. Jung (*op. cit.*, pp. 101-2). It is generally true that "often we hate in others the thing which we fear in ourselves", as Frances G. Wickes says in her *The Inner World of Childhood* on page 36.

b. Feeling. To perceive accurately demands concentrated attention, and "attention cannot originally be distinguished from *feeling*" says Varendonck (*The Psychology of Day-Dreams*, p. 207); he goes on to show that feelings control the perception of what we see, and our observation is also aided by memory of what has been seen and heard in the past. It is easier to copy a text in a familiar language, and to study a subject wherein we feel some interest and can take pleasure. Even when we perceive, we have still to recognise the object, and in so doing we habitually relate it at once to our own personal interests and give it some emotional colouring—"I like this, but hate that". For politeness, we may at times conceal our feelings, but in some unguarded moment, while talking in sleep, or jesting, or through some personal remark or slip of the tongue,

our feelings escape control and make themselves known.

c. *Thinking.* This is less straightforward than the careless may assume. It is of two vitally unlike types: (1) There is the conscious *deliberate* thinking, with concentration, on a subject chosen by the will. We all know how hard that is, how quickly the mind slips off to free thoughts which please it better. The fight against 'distractions' is known to every seeker for truth as a very 'dweller on the threshold' of the spiritual life; and until the mind comes to heel it cannot be used for deeper search into Reality. (2) Then there is the other type of mental activity known to all of us so well—we call it 'brown study', daydreaming, musing; it is the scientists' '*autistic* thinking', so-called because it guides itself, and though it can be checked by the will always follows its own paths until actually brought to a halt.

We sit to meditate on God. We think of His wonderful creation, how green the trees are after rain, how delightfully cool that rain makes us too, how it also makes the milkman come late, how our coffee will be delayed, so we shall be late for the office, and today there is an inspection, and our promotion depends on a good report—and now where is our meditation on God? The mind has run along its own lines, leaving high and dry our resolve to meditate.

A chance word in what we read or think, a single object in the scene we look at, physically or mentally, is enough to set the mind off daydreaming in this way.

The mind now functions in a definitely more primitive way than we had planned for it. Daydreaming is the pleasant game of childhood—" Let's pretend ! " And all the varied pictures or thoughts which thus come up in the mind are guided by some hidden wish (*e.g.*, we want promotion) and illumined by a memory which preserves much we can never recall at will. For deep down in the self " nothing that has once been a perception is lost for later use " (Varendonck, p. 212)—perhaps only in the postmortem life.

Now Daydreams are of two kinds : (1) *Visual*, where a series of scenes out of memory pass before the mind's eye like a cinema film, with a few verbal comments like the captions ; and (2) *Verbal* musings, at times illustrated by a vivid picture from memory recalled by some word as it floats through the mind. It is notable that autistic thinking jumps about capriciously from one subject to another, ignores commonsense facts, and accepts as real whatever may please the 'dream-self' therein active. Any supposition which may arise, " If I can fly I shall escape ", is at once realised as " I escape by flying ". Any failure to find a solution to a problem in the daydream is refused, just as a child insists on an answer to every question. It matters little how absurd the solution may be, for the moment we can criticise as absurd anything in the daydream, the whole ceases at once, and we find ourselves back for a moment in the original meditation on God. The critical faculty belongs to the rational 'waking' part of the mind and cannot be used in other states. So, too,

thinking in *words* is more typical of the truly ' waking-self ', while the dream-self ' thinks more often in pictures.

Any emotion or recent memory easily switches the mind on to autistic thinking; that is why a quiet life and a peaceful spot are so helpful for one who wants to meditate. Distractions are inevitable when the mind is upset by some recent quarrel with the cook or a dispute over politics, taxes or electric charges.

In her excellent book *The Inner World of Man*, p. 222, Frances G. Wickes says: " Daydream is a form of escape from reality into a world where fulfilment comes without effort—a personal fairy-tale—something woven by the undeveloped ego. The Daydream is the childish form of undirected thought. It contains the magic solution—the instant recognition of the wished-for image of the self. . . . In the Daydream the ego is always the central hero." Thus Baudouin tells us how as a child he fought many wars, designed maps, worked out constitutions, etc., for an imaginary Republic of which he was, of course, the President. The servant maid daydreams in her leisure-hour that she marries a Duke and attends the Queen's Coronation. And Hitler dreams of his " New Order ", wherein Germans are the ruling race and Jews have no existence ! Well, such daydreams are childish, though we may wreck a nation in trying to realize them. The lunatic builds a world of his own imagining in his own mind, and sees the real world distorted into the image he has given it (see Ogdon's *The Kingdom of the Lost*).

At the same time, the very Fore-Conscious which [illegible] in the childish Daydream is also the source of all authentic creative genius. As Coriat tells us, Myths are just waking dreams—and so indeed are poems, novels, great paintings, and the soaring arches of a Gothic church or the stately *gopurams* of a Hindu temple. To the artist this 'dream-world' of his is absolutely real and alive, as substantial as the physical world of his tools; [illegible] breakfast and the landlord's irritating demand for rent. "An internal perception . . . for the fore-conscious has the same value as an external object", says Varendonck (p. 149). Before the sculptor's eyes the coming statue is *there*, obvious, in the stone, which has only to be chiselled to set it free.

Frances G. Wickes describes the creative vision by another word, Phantasy. She writes (*op. cit.*, p. 222): "Phantasy . . . is a form of experience which is attained only by people who have paid a good deal of attention to the material of the unconscious; . . . phantasies do not *develop* involuntarily. All real works of creation have sprung from creative phantasy. An artist looking upon the canvas sees growing there an image. . . . Phantasy is not a personal creation, but it acts creatively upon the life of the individual." And that is why the true artist, musician or poet does not claim his work as his *own*, it is work, good or bad, and personality does not enter into it at all.

It has been suggested that most phantasies really are inspired by 'spirits' in the worlds of the discarnate, but that is not just now susceptible of proof. Certainly

many of them throw vivid light upon problems at the centre of the self and thus facilitate their solution. And many enrich the culture of mankind.

Other Dream-Waking states of the mind include the following :

a. Hypnosis : which is not a sleep as it superficially seems to be; it combines extreme suggestibility with a catalepsy or temporary paralysis of the limbs, and a suspension of usual reflex actions. Instant obedience is often given to the operator, save where strong inhibitions of conscience would be involved. The hypnotic subject can sometimes walk and talk freely, hear orders to carry out later on, describe what is supernormally perceived at a distance or in the subtle worlds. It is striking that the same secondary personality always reappears, and that, as Coriat says, the " [illegible] is exceedingly active" in hypnotism (*Abnormal Psychology*, p. 141). Cornillier's book gives a wonderful picture of this state in a young girl.

b. Absent-mindedness is a similar temporary trance; the man stands still, loses sensation and awareness of his surroundings, forgets his own actions, and gives vague replies. He may easily be recalled to the normal 'waking state'.

c. The *Hypnagogic State*, or *Sub-Waking* : This state often has extremely vivid sense-impressions, with voices and brilliant visions, with a slight paralysis of limbs and eyelids; sometimes nightmares manifest. It may last from one to fifteen minutes, and usually occurs just before

falling asleep and again just before waking up. Many daydreams are also preceded and followed by this condition. Thoughts or pictures in this state point to the perhaps hidden significance of the dream or daydream.

d. Reverie or *Memory*. Coriat (*op. cit.*, p. 177) says: "Memory may be defined as the . . . conservation or storing-up of impressions or experiences and their later reproduction", one by one, and usually in the same order.

e. Habits: These "are . . . unconscious memories, because [illegible] by thought", he adds on p. 181. It is very difficult to stop the mind from following a deeply-grooved habit of thought, for at that time the conscious 'waking mind' is in fact in a sort of trance, almost unconscious—as it is in certain states like that known as the 'Prayer of Quiet', a sort of *samādhi*.

With relation to the experience of Advaita, it is of the utmost importance to realize that when we are supposed to be awake, we are actually in one or other of these 'Sub-Waking' or Daydreaming states for about 98% of the time. We are truly *awake*, that is, acting with conscious thought, perception and will, for not more than 2% of our day—the rest of our time being passed in a dreamy condition, wherein the world is seen only as we imagine it to be, according to our own desires or fears. And this state certainly overshadows and colours the little part of our time when we really are in what we call the 'Waking State'.

3. Dreams

a. What is a Dream? As we have seen, our dreams when asleep are very like those we indulge in during most of our 'waking' life, when we go 'woolgathering' or 'building castles in Spain'. There is no sharp frontier between the states; one grades off imperceptibly into another, and just as there are many shades of degree in attending to the 'outer' world while awake, so too in attending to the 'inner' world while asleep. The dream is preceded, as it will be ended, by a short period of drowsiness while the mind hovers between the states, hazily musing over experiences lately enjoyed, vaguely contemplating those about to be passed through.

Like our daydreams, those of the night follow a path closely chalked out by our own mental habits, the predominant desires or fears of the mind. Like the extremist Freud, Coriat states positively that every dream represents the fulfilment of a long-latent desire, which, to overcome the 'waking' sense of decency, is often symbolised—sex parts being represented as spoon and cup, pool and fish, etc. These innate wishes are held in the Unconscious, whose very nature, Coriat tells us, is desire; they are mostly of a primitive, violent, amoral or infantile form. They may even be lustful, murderous, full of jealousy and spite, and would profoundly shock our normal selves if not decently disguised in some such way.

Rivers admits that many dreams do relate to these early violent periods of the mind, but insists that in fact most refer to recent experiences and problems disturbing

or occupying the mind at the time—though perhaps subconsciously. Gerhard Adler agrees with this, saying (*op. cit.*, p. 315): "If a dream reproduces a situation belonging to the remote past, it is because of its bearing on the present." Thus a dispute over the division of property among brothers now may cause us to dream of childish quarrels with them in the nursery.

Rivers brings strong evidence that nearly all dreams relate to the recent past, but as the inner dramatist freely changes his material, often composing a very passable plot for a novel or short story during a single dream, memories of waking experience are often distorted out of recognition. But Coriat is sure that however much we may fail to recognize the source of a dream "we cannot dream of things we do not know" (*Abnormal Psychology*, p. 113) and have never experienced—whether the memory of that experience be dormant now or subconsciously repressed. Much is drawn from long-past reading.

A few dreams seem definitely to recall circumstances which have occurred in earlier lives of the individual—as may be proved by later-discovered historical facts then known to no living person. These constitute one of the few independent evidences of reincarnation, as at least a common experience. A few dreams may have been telepathically communicated from the environment of some friend or relative with whom we are in close sympathy. Some can be explained only as confused memories of actual experience that same night while functioning on the 'inner planes'. This is dogmatically

enied by materialistic psychologists, whose number early grows less.

Rivers tells us that a dream tries to solve some 'conict', much as a student sometimes finds his mathematial problem solved immediately on waking up. As reams arise from some problem occupying the mind—y no means always or even often sexual, as Freud, rguing from cases of neurotic and oversexed individuals n Vienna, imagined—all or most dreams on the same ight have the same 'hidden content', the mind being isually engrossed by one dominant problem only at a ime. But where several problems do press on the mind t once, dreams may severally try to solve two or more on the same night. When a solution is found satisfactory to the subconscious mind of the dreamer, the dream is felt to be pleasant; when no real solution is found, the dreamer experiences a 'disturbed night', and sometimes even a 'nightmare'.

With his usual radical scepticism, Archer contemptuously dismisses the idea that dreams fulfil wishes, declaring that there is no evidence of this whatever—wishes arising even in the dream itself being often disappointed by the dream. This is true, but it does not deny the 'hidden content' which produced the dream—and a 'wish' necessarily implies that it may not be fulfilled. Failure at gratification makes the dream a disappointment, or a terror. Rivers agrees that wish-fulfilment is not attained by all dreams; does 'waking-life' fulfil all desires either? Certainly the child who dreams night after night that he is being chased by a

mad bull (personifying the angry father), has only one wish in his terrified heart, that he may not fall asleep at all—this being the only apparent way of escape from the bull. The one who repeatedly *just* misses the important train in a dream may reproduce a vivid 'waking' experience thereby, or it may show his eagerness to make the great journey through death to a 'better land'.

Some have felt that dreams have no meaning, but are just the mind's uncontrolled and senseless activity, which goes on its own way as soon as the conscious discipline of the will has been relaxed. They are in fact 'daydreams' which we indulge during the night, and like daydreams are not subject to the will or purpose. Archer shows that most of them are simply [illegible] chains, and quotes one of his own. He was reading about Napoleon when he became drowsy; in that hypnagogic state his mind supplied the natural thought of 'Waterloo', where Napoleon was ruined; this was changed to 'Bakerloo', the name of an underground railway in London, and that set him off on a dream of a railway journey. I have personally had such dreams.

The same enquirer into hundreds of his own dreams declares that a dream depends on pure chance; who on earth can say which out of millions of mental expressions in the maelstrom of ungoverned mental currents happens to come to the top and so become distorted into a dream? A mere physical stimulus such as cold or hunger is enough to account for a dream—though Archer does not see that such a stimulus creates the immediate 'problem' Rivers speaks about. He denies that most

dreams show any relation with a past experience, even of the previous day or a recent period. A dominating mental element, such as the stage-door for an actress, may often recur, and the sailor may often dream of being at sea, the soldier of being bombed in a muddy trench; but the mental attitude of the 'dream-self' may be diametrically opposed to that held by the 'waking-self'. Wickes warns us that as many children's dreams do not reflect their own 'problems' but those of a parent or teacher, telepathically sensed, we must be careful in 'analysing' the dream of a child.

b. *How the Dream Works*: Dreams always centre round the ego of the dreamer, who, though he may be veiled in some way or altogether disguised, is always the hero. He may think, act, speak, hear or merely watch the drama which unfolds before his inner vision; logical thought is possible to him, and through desires awakened by the dream itself he may greatly modify its course. The sequence of events is always ruled by the 'guiding wish', which may not be openly expressed, however; changes of events or scene arise from some doubt or objection, which is at once acted out, as it is in a daydream. A supposition is at once fulfilled by a new scene: "If I swim" is a suggestion, and the dreamer is at once seen swimming over the river. Some detail in the scene suggests a new idea or memory, and the "wish is father to the thought". Nothing is absurd to the 'dream-self', which delights in this free visualising wherein it enjoys something like the Creator's

omnipotence. Archer insists that conscience and a real moral sense appear in dreams—though perhaps that is not true in the case of many people.

In his interesting little book on children's dreams, mostly during and after the first World War, Kimmins tells us that from 5 to 9 children draw more than adults from the race-memories of the 'Collective Unconscious', and from 10 to 12 most of their dreams definitely fulfil wishes and give egoistic adventures, while sex-dreams begin veiled as 'bathing' between 15 and 17. Their dreams are easily confused by them with daydreams and [illegible] and they find it hard to separate off what was really dreamed during sleep.

Coriat insists that all dreams are a series of answers to some doubt or problem; when no solution is found in the dream, the question recurs on that or the following night, for the Subconscious, like a child, takes no refusal. As sleep dives into deeper layers of the mind, the subject of a recent problem maintains itself active and manifests as a dream, whose incidents relate to the problem and can be understood through intelligent analysis. Rivers puts it thus (pp. 81, 94): "Dreams are attempts to solve in sleep conflicts of the waking life, and . . . these attempts are necessarily, from the nature of sleep, of a more or less infantile kind, since in sleep only the earlier levels of mental functioning are active." He adds, "The dream is a process whereby we are thus brought face to face with these earlier selves of ours." In a sleep-dream the infant-state can be more easily remembered than in daydreaming; all

we have ever experienced lies there in the mind's deeper strata, for the power of memory has no limit and can recall to us events forgotten even for sixty years by the 'waking-self'.

Archer insists that there is no evidence for the common belief that dreams are instantaneous and flash through the mind in a second or less just before waking. Some may last all night, he says, and many have been proved to continue for many minutes at least. Yet it is true that the dream of a single night may cover events of many years, as related in the *Yoga Vāsistha*. The dreaming self shares this timeless power with the waking self, whose memory can slip over many years in a moment of time. Alfred Adler says that a dream is short when the solution to the problem is easily found, and it is soon forgotten when the emotion it rouses is stronger than reason.

Jung pushes aside all Freud's specious arguments about the 'Censor', and says we have no reason to think that dreams are intentionally misleading or have any ulterior motive; most show the dreamer's actual subconscious attitude to the things dreamed about. But in dreams certainly appear many of the old mythical symbols so much used by our ancestors—symbols like the circle for the Unmanifest, the cross in the circle for God Manifest; in the Middle Ages the conscious mind still freely used these in Europe, as did for example the Alchemists; they still survive latent in the subconscious mind. Gerhard Adler sums up the different approaches of Freud and Jung, by saying that Freud sees in dreams

the *symptoms* of mental or moral disease, while Jung seeks a *symbol* helping the dreamer to reorientate his whole life and lead him to perfect integration of the self with the All.

c. Why do we Dream? Few psychologists agree with the dictum of Alfred Adler (*op. cit.*, p. 259) that "the dream's most important function (is) to lead the dreamer away from common sense. In the dream, therefore, the dreamer commits a self-deception". No such tortuous motive seems to underlie the actions of the 'dream-self', but rather the same search for satisfaction which engrosses the one self in the 'waking state'. Pleasures missed in the 'waking state' are sought afresh through the dreams of the night, and ways of avoiding troubles and pains perceived by the 'waking-self' are sought in those deeper strata of consciousness, which are not ordinarily available so long as the mind is absorbed in its 'outer world' phenomena.

The dream seems rather Nature's provision whereby the self may contact those deeper layers and from them draw memories and resources buried there from experiences of long ago—perhaps even of previous lives. It is a common experience of the dreamer to find that the subconscious self thus revealed has a far more penetrating, a far wider, wisdom than he knows when 'awake', and that problems which torture his mind in the latter state solve themselves with perfect ease when stated clearly by a dream.

This seems to be the dream's real purpose; it is one shared with the higher animals, and perhaps also with beings higher in the scale than ourselves. The process of dreaming has so much in common with what is described of life on the 'inner planes' and with the creative processes of the genius's mind that we need feel no shame if we spend most of every night in this way. There can be no possible harm, and it is pure superstition to imagine that dreams disturb one's rest. Some are prodigious dreamers, and I personally can remember incidents from not less than three or four dreams every night. Yet this in no way seems to lessen the ability for long and intense mental work and study during the day.

d. How does a Dream End? We have seen already that we usually wake up at the emotional crisis of a dream, so that we rarely come to its natural close; the strong emotion turns the mind to observe some outer stimulus—perhaps the striking of a clock, the cawing of a crow, the falling of rain on the exposed face. So too, when any strong wish, say to be punctual for breakfast, overcomes the natural primary wish to go on sleeping, we are wakened; or through the subconscious memory that we must get up at five to catch a train the body is obediently awake at five, or a few minutes before or after. Because the crisis of the dream is usually near or at its close—as in a good drama—we naturally forget the less interesting earlier portions of the dream, which moved our emotions less profoundly.

In the case of many inspirational people, dreams often end with an authoritative Voice, in a few striking words uttering some deep and valuable truth relevant to the dreamer's problem. 'Mabel Collins' in this way brought through "Light on the Path", a most remarkable and precious little Scripture, which repays endless study. Night after night in her dreams she was shown a new sentence shining on the wall of the "Hall of Learning", until the book was complete. Such cases obviously suggest direct guidance from great Souls on the 'inner planes' who have chosen to assume the responsibilities of a Guru to the dreaming soul.

e. The Value of Dreams: As a natural reaction against the absurd 'dream books' beloved by the ignorant and superstitious, the West became contemptuous of dreams, and held them of no value, mere absurd concoctions of a disorderly mind and without significance. The labours of Freud, his co-workers and successors, have brought that attitude to a deserved end in our days. Dreams are now recognised as of immense significance, both from the light they throw upon dark places in the soul's deeper layers, and from the possibility they offer of real contact with such Great Souls in the beyond. It is even held, and there is a good deal of evidence to support it, that our dream life is as continuous, as real, as spiritually significant, as the life of the 'waking-self', which interrupts its steady course rather than is itself interrupted by the physically necessary process of dream and sleep.

In so far as it deals with the more subtle, more refined portions of the Self, we can well believe with the Vedantins that such dream life is actually nearer to Reality than the distorted view our senses give us of the physical world. It is true that if dreams result from problems and desires, the Jivanmukta who has attained to absolute peace and desirelessness can have no dreams. But it is certain that all other living beings with mind have their many problems, and need feel no shame that these come before the self in the shape of a dream. In this way they can be solved with the deeper wisdom of the ages treasured up in the heart's caverns, made accessible by the withdrawal of the conscious waking mind's limited knowledge and the abdication of its strict control of thought and feeling.

Much as the 'dream-self' may seem to differ from that known to us in so little part when we are 'awake', in fact there is only the one Self in both the states, as is well recognised by that self on waking after a vivid dream; and he who would "know that self" may gather much from a careful study of his dreams.

4. The Sleeping State

From the half-waking state of Dream we pass on to the state of 'Deep Sleep', often rashly assumed to be a state of total unconsciousness.

Coriat defines Sleep from the material viewpoint as a "negative state, a cessation of all activity . . . to protect the organism against fatigue" (*op. cit.*, pp. 93-94). He points out that it is not found at all in the lowest

animals, but is common to certain plants and all the more sensitive animals, being due to the "cutting out of all peripheral stimuli", that is, sense-impressions, so that the nervous system may through rest recover its tone. Sleep involves the complete loss of all sense of time, and usually also of environment or place; a monotony of sense-impressions like a dull lecture may induce it, while it may be postponed for some time by excitement, keen interest or even by the will or sense of duty, as when a mother remains awake all night to tend her sick child, or when a child is allowed as a treat to stay up late. It is more necessary than food; a man may starve for many days without harm, but three nights without sleep may reduce him to a nervous wreck. Sleeplessness may be caused by physical ill-health, by an upsurge of ideas and wishes from the Fore-Conscious, or even by anxiety or fear. Nothing is known of the cause of a few known cases of persons sleeping continuously even for years on end.

Generally speaking, Sleep is a gesture of disgust with the 'world' of the moment. Varendonck (pp. 321-322) quotes Clapareda as saying; "Sleep is a phenomenon of disinterest as regards the outer world, or rather . . . for the present situation. It constitutes, so to speak, a psychological suicide", and he also quotes Bergson as saying: "One sleeps in exact proportion as one disinterests oneself". That is why interest in what is going on keeps sleep away until fatigue overcomes the interest, and even the child falls asleep during an exciting film. Varendonck himself says (p. 322): "The

person who goes to sleep renounces perception, not only of the outer world but also of his *inner world*—that is, the internal representations of the outer world."[1] Yet, as Coriat says (*The Meaning of Dreams*, p. 39), "the most complex mental activity may take place during sleep", such, for instance, as dreams and the half-[illegible] stirred to instant wakefulness by a sudden call to duty. The state of Sleep is a withdrawal from the conscious 'waking-self', but it is never quite total; even from a sound sleep the doctor rises at the night-call bell, while his wife sleeps on till the baby cries—which wakes her but does not rouse the doctor.

As Sleep supervenes on the brief Hypnagogic State, one by one many layers of consciousness are in turn switched out of action. As Sleep becomes deeper, more of these subconscious layers recede into unconsciousness and earlier modes of thinking prevail. The first layers suspended relate to the most recent events, then come those of a year or more ago, then those of ten years ago, then those of youth—and at last we function again through the mind and personality which were ours during childhood. We are now, as we say, 'fast asleep', yet the mind may be busy fabricating dreams wherein we act and think and feel as we did when we were little children. "The deeper the level, the more strange and unlike his normal waking self will the dream and the dream-personality seem to be,"

[1] The student may be interested in comparing this view of sleep as a withdrawal from a distasteful 'world' with the mystic sleep', which marks the spiritually advanced, who have wholly turned from the unsatisfactory sense-world to the Real Self 'within'.

says Rivers (*Conflict and Dream*, p. 43). The waking-self, on reassertion of itself at 'waking', rejects this alien dream-personality as 'not-self' and promptly forgets it, its actions, emotions and ideas.

Thus our 'deep sleep' seems to the 'waking self' to have been dreamless, while it may well have been filled with vivid and interesting dreams, now rejected and forgotten. Carrying further the process of diving back thus into the past childhood of the self, it is probable that in the real 'dreamless sleep' of *suṣupti*, those mental layers relating to antenatal conditions, even before entry into the womb, may be functioning. The self is at that time 'awake' on the 'astral plane', and his normal 'waking mind' has no words or concepts to express conditions there, so it brings nothing of its experiences through, and seems to have been unconscious all the while.

In his *Abnormal Psychology* (p. 118) Dr. Coriat has a striking passage about 'deep sleep'. He writes: "It has been said that a sound sleep is dreamless, but if dreams do occur in sound sleep, we have no proof of the fact, because we have no memory of them on awakening. It is extremely doubtful, however, if there is enough of this persistent consciousness in a really sound sleep, to form any dreams. Of course, lack of memory after a deep sleep is no proof that there was no conscious activity during this time, because in deep hypnotic states mental activity goes on, but there is no memory of this activity on regaining the normal waking condition. The same might be true of deep sleep. If dreams only occur in

light sleep or in the intermediate sleep states, we remember them, but this does not prove that dreams are absent in deep sleep because we do not remember them. Under ordinary circumstances, we are able to recollect only a small proportion of our mental activity during sleep"—or indeed during the 'waking state' either. How many thoughts of six hours ago can we remember now?

Archer admits that there may well be dreamless sleep—though this is uncertain and cannot possibly be proved by our 'waking-selves'—but it is notable that we never remember the start of any dream and, as Coriat adds, "we scarcely ever finish a dream" either, for the emotions at its crisis are usually enough to waken us. We dream of falling over a precipice, but wake before we hit the ground.

In fact, we know almost nothing about 'deep sleep' at all, and it were foolish dogmatically to assert that we are then immersed in the 'bliss of the Self'. Yet that may well be true, as the Vedantins say, seeing that possibly the ego is really lost in that state, as in the analogous state of *samādhi*, along with the illusory factors of space and time.

5. Reintegration of the Self[1]

Without Religion the soul becomes unbalanced, disharmonious, and unless the lack is remedied it may

[1] This section is based on the account in Gerhard Adler's *Studies in Analytical Psychology*, 1948.

plunge into serious trouble. The Soul exists as a tiny fragment of the vast All-Self—as Dr. A. D. Watson, in Shakespeare's person, writes: "I was the universe focussed to a point of personality"—and apart from the universe what focus is possible? It is this focussing of the universe on the personality, of the personality upon the All, which is the field of Religion, the problem before every individual self, the relation between the soul and God, the Absolute.

To the individual that vast 'Collective Unconscious', dimly sensed at times as an infinite Unknown, is a sort of 'God', a sea whence he emerges with a memory of the old symbols and magics innate in that ocean, symbols which will later help him reorientate his whole nature and readjust all that is out of harmony. Under the terrific pressure of that 'ocean' all around him, the child has to fashion his individuality; for him reality and phantasy merge in one, daydream and waking-self appear the same; the adult has raised a high wall between them, which only the creative artist or sage can healthily [illegible] lunatic does it in his own way!

The child is not born with any sense of the ego; until [illegible] taught by adults he naturally says "Baby wants that", not "I want that". He is aware subconsciously that *he* is one thing and the 'baby' is another. The sense of an 'I' is not innate but acquired, and at puberty a long struggle is needed to establish it fully. Indeed, all life is that struggle between the new ego and the surrounding world; the ego tries to mould that world to its desires, and in return the world affects the

ego and shapes it on its own design by inexorable hammerings. The world as seen by each ego depends largely on its own wishes, its own fears and loves and hates.

The ego is not inevitable in Nature, and the vast ocean of the 'Collective Unconscious' always tries to drown this needless luxury. Afraid to take the next step in 'growing up', the ego tries to retreat, to withdraw from the conflict into the quiet dark of that 'ocean', the mother's womb, the 'God' whence it first emerged. But if it is to remain in being at all, it must face experience and conflict, and not renounce the 'world' by any such childish retreat into a neurotic refusal of life.

By middle age (35 to 40) the ego has usually been formed and well established; it should then face the inevitability of old age, decay and death, turning inward to understand life's meaning and to seek its own integration with the Whole, its real fulfilment. Life or Wisdom includes both growth and decay, birth and death, active and passive, male and female, life and form—all opposites. Both sides have to be faced in order to realize Unity and to attain harmony and balance. Life's very purpose is to realize the latent 'wholeness' of the human Archetype; all spiritual struggles and difficulties, experiences of joy and pain, are to help the Soul draw nearer the real Self while its individuality remains unshattered. For true individualism is not egotistical; the 'individual' is he who is truly integrated with the Whole, who cannot be divided from It.

It is only self-consciousness which lifts man above the animal, but as it is always easier to fall than to rise it requires a constant effort to maintain that self-consciousness intact. The child as yet knows little of it, but as he grows his happy irresponsibility is lost—the sweet playful innocence of childhood is clouded over with the toils and duties of youth. There is always a reluctance to advance "where the brook and river meet"; the heart is often filled with yearnings to escape somehow from the new bonds back into the blissful state of infancy where "Mother does everything for me". In our political life of the day this manifests as hero-worship, the blind following of mob opinion, dictatorship, all of which masquerade as patriotism, discipline, and other high-sounding things, but are simply moral cowardice, the fear of 'growing up'. Much religious orthodoxy is of the same type.

This 'I', self-consciousness, has separated itself out from the universal 'oneness of life', and its first and incessant longing is to return to that warm fraternity or unity. But it is not alone; the 'I' implies other 'I''s, and so there are conflicts among these 'I''s, problems to be solved by the growth of intelligence and ever-widening experience. When the 'I' broke away from the 'biological state of life', man lost the "unquestioning harmony with the world in which he lived", being pushed outward from Nature's blind circle. Subject and Object were split apart, Plato's 'androgyne' became male and female, ever yearning to be reunited in perfect love. This initial separation is the source of Religion—

it is no cunning invention of crafty priests, no clever sublimation of a repressed sex urge, but the fundamental need of human life. The 'Two', spark and fire, man and God, individual and the Whole—now apart, yet mystically crave to be one again.

The way to that Oneness differs for each human soul, just as there are infinite ways to reach the top of the same mountain. "The goal is fixed, but the way of approach and its achievement are left to each individual", says Adler (p. 100); that is why all regimentation of souls, all strict paths of orthodoxy are as unscientific as they are cruel.

"Religion is man's reply to his existence as man—and in religion man therefore finds his fullest and most vital expression," says Adler (p. 157). In his mind rise from the 'Collective Unconscious', his source, hints of solutions to every question, in the form of symbols such as delight every child. These symbols appear in dreams and phantasies, as in automatic drawings which externalise an inner pressure and so relieve its strain upon the self, curing neuroses and enabling true adaptation to the environment. If you gaze intently, Adler tells us, on an image seen in phantasy, it comes alive like the characters of a novel or a play; it acts freely, using materials from the deeper strata of the mind, and so reveals those unknown tracts for our exploration and understanding.

From these lower strata comes Religion, for "religion is rooted in the unconscious" (p. 158), and when explained, formulated by the conscious mind, it becomes a

philosophy. The answers given by religion are instinctive, so they are common to all races and all ages; they are not governed by the will but surge up from the deeper layers, moulded on pre-existent archetypes—like the circle, the square, the pentacle, the serpent, the tree, the lotus and the *mandala*. The greatest of all Archetypes is 'God' both immanent and transcendent, the perfect symbol of Union and Fulfilment. So in many myths the Sun is born out of a cave at midnight; and "it is the polarity between the night of the primeval womb and the light of consciousness that has been born out of it, which produces the human drama" (p. 159).

The lonely, isolated self-conscious ego—moving, time-bound, separative—must be reconciled, reunited, with the 'Unconscious' One Self—static, timeless and unitive; the revolutionary must combine with the conservative, the active with the passive, the spiritually male with the female, if both development and security are to be assured. It is futile to run away from life, for "the soul can only achieve her ultimate meaning in and through the realities of this actual earthly world".

Now the 'Collective Unconscious' cannot be realized save through the individual mind; It accepts "time and mortality in order to become an actual individual event" and to manifest Itself in 'play'. We may even dare to say that "the Self needs the ego in order to become manifest" (p. 174), for God is not wholly God without His creation, as the Hermetist would say. But

having seen God, the ego has no more to do; it cannot survive that vision, for "no man has seen God and lived" (cf. GA. 33 : 3). Real religious experience is a Void, a near-extinction of the ego-[illegible] through its nearness to the Fire. This terrific experience has to be 'stepped down', canalised, by symbols and rites, or it would blast the soul into utter ruin. So long as the Life of direct experience can manifest through these symbols and ceremonies, so long as a Soul can in them really contact the Fire safely, so long can that form of religion live. When the symbols are worn out and rites become mechanical, the form is ready to die; then the Unconscious refashions in its archetypal moulds a new set to inspire and guide the souls of future generations—and the world finds the Prophet of a new religion.

There are some who think they can ignore these mighty forces of the deeper self. For a time perhaps they can, to some extent, though later on they will inevitably be drawn nearer to the scorching heat of that Fire by the efforts of their [illegible]. But for many, individual Realisation is the fourth Cardinal Virtue, a true renaissance or rebirth. But it comes at its own time; it cannot be fixed in time, for the "spirit blows where it will". In spiritual life we find that "timelessness, eternity, is not interested in the present; it is a circle in which past and future merge into one another without a break" (p. 180); and we have the ancient symbol of the serpent swallowing its own tail.

6. Universal Consciousness

1. It is Universal

Some in India have fancied that none can know God save those who take Indian Gurus or follow the paths anciently laid down in this holy land. That is as if to say that the human soul is one thing in India and something quite different in the West, that the oneness of which Vedanta speaks so much is an illusion, that the colour of the body decides spiritual advance!

There is no monopoly in spirituality. It is no more confined to Hindu orthodoxy than to the Catholic Church or the outer creed known as Islām. The human soul is, everywhere alike and equally, made in God's image; God dwells in all alike, and His grace reveals Himself to souls in every land and age. States that are known in India as *samādhi* and *jīvanmukti* are in the West known as 'ecstasy' and 'saintship' or 'the marriage of the soul'. In both India and the West, the way laid down for attainment is the hard and narrow way of the 'crucifixion' of the ego—obliterating the petty narrow selfish self, so that the vast limitless eternal selfless Self may gloriously shine.

And in both East and West the first experience of that Self usually comes with an overwhelming sense of its immensity; one feels oneself the living heart of the entire universe—not even only of the world—extending everywhere, all-inclusive, immanent in everything, perpetual. Like Bl. Henry of Suso or Swami Rama Tirth

one cannot contain the joy of that realisation; it overflows in bursting song, expresses itself in a universal affection unattached to persons, and all the deeper, the richer, on that account. Some have been so powerfully swept away that their bodies take to dancing, wild cries of jubilation alternate with an ocean of fathomless silent bliss, the whole body shines with an inner radiance, the world reflects God's divine light shining out from the human centre of His glory.

2. Literary Voices

Some like Tennyson have known of this through the mantric repeating of their own names, as he tells us in prose and in "The Ancient Sage": "For more than once when I Sat all alone, revolving in myself The word that is the symbol of myself, The mortal limit of the Self was loosed And passed into the Nameless, as a cloud Melts into Heaven. I touched my limbs, the limbs Were strange, not mine—and yet no shade of doubt But utter clearness, and through loss of self The gain of such large life as matched with ours Were Sun to spark—unshadowable in words, Themselves but shadows of a shadow world." He called this state, 'the clearest of the clearest, the surest of the surest, utterly beyond words, where death was an almost laughable impossibility, the loss of personality—if so it were—seeming no extinction but the only true life". Others, poets too, have met it by mere contact with Nature's beauty, like Wordsworth in "Lines on Tintern Abbey", quoted in our Appendix, p. 288.

Others, more human in their sympathy, have found God in contemplation of our vast human family, its joys and sorrows, its constant striving upward to the light, like Edward Carpenter who, in his notes on *Towards Democracy*, writes: "All I can say is that there seems to be a vision possible to man, as from some more universal standpoint, free from the obscurity and localism which especially connect themselves with the passing clouds of desire, fear and all ordinary thought and emotion; in that sense another and separate faculty; and as vision always means a sense of light, so here is a sense of inward light, unconnected of course with the mortal eye, but bringing to the eye of the mind the impression that it *sees*, and by means of a medium which washes as it were the *interior* surfaces of all objects and things and persons—how can I express it?—and this is most defective, for the sense is a sense that one *is* those objects and things and persons that one perceives (and even that one is the whole universe)--a sense in which sight and touch and hearing are all fused in identity. Nor can the matter be understood without realising that the whole faculty is deeply and intimately rooted on the far side of the moral and emotional nature, and beyond the thought-region of the brain." How can words tell this state?

Others again have found Him through introspection, like Tulasidas in his *Viṇaya Patrika*, 112: "We wander, wander, search, and then we find, But find it in the silence of the mind." Others, like the great Zarathushtrian scholar, Dr. M. N. Dhalla, in his *Zoroastrian*

Theology (p. 313), through his devotion to the personal Lord: "Truth would dawn thus upon him and shine in its effulgence, while an ecstatic insight would be aroused in him, and in a moment of ecstasy when the devotee would transcend all self-consciousness, the wave of the occult light would surge in upon him, and the mysterious something would sweep, like a meteor, over his soul, giving a sudden flash that would illumine the inner world. . . . When the mystic is bathed in devotion, he is so intoxicated with divine wisdom that he thinks himself one with the divine. In this condition the devotee does not meditate upon God, he feels Him; he does not think of God, he owns Him." Some again have found Him through the marvels of modern science, like J. H. Randall in his *The Spirit of the New Philosophy*, pp. 125, 129, 157: "Science is rapidly [illegible] in demonstrating the unbroken oneness and perfect internal unity of the entire, all-inclusive being of the world. . . . Our minds are not our minds only; they are in a real and deeper sense the minds of the Cosmos, and as such, they must be in essential unity with it. . . . The experience of every Self is included in a larger experience, that each Self is a part of a Greater Self. . . . In their deepest essence all beings are One Being, and all individual Selves are One Self; and there are no such things as private, separate, exclusive, individual beings or selves, save in the false and illusory thinking."

There are as many ways to the summit as there are souls to tread them, but all have this in common, that they involve the total dropping of the personality which

has so long deceived us with the notion that it is the real self. To the many quotations in the Appendix I add here only a few. In his *The Twentieth Plane*, Dr. A.D. Watson writes: "One must be entirely oblivious of self to scale the heights" (p. 139), and that is the central teaching of every school in Christianity. William Watson, the famous modern poet, has in his *The Mock Self*: "Few friends are mine, though many wights there be Who, meeting oft a phantom that makes claim To be myself, and hath my face and name, And whose thin fraud I wink at privily, Account this light impostor very me. What boots it undeceive them, and proclaim Myself myself, and whelm this cheat with shame? I care not, so he leave my true self free, Impose not on me also; but alas! I too, at fault, bewildered, sometimes take Him for myself, and far from mine own sight, Torpid, indifferent, doth mine own self pass; And yet anon leaps suddenly awake, And spurns the pilfering mime into the night." Prof. J. S. Haldane writes in *Hibbert Journal*, vol. 21, "It is only in losing his own self-interest that a man can realise the presence within him of God, and in so doing escape from a world of shadows and illusion. Religion is the recognition in practice as well as in theory of our oneness with God as the ultimate reality." This teaching is also found in the *Yoga Vasistha* (6a : 93 : 62): "To him who does not take this or that (for himself) the Whole is given."

Rapt in the soaring glory of initiation, in Wagner's great Music Drama *Tristan und Isolde* (Act 2 Scene 2), Tristan cries ecstatically in sudden realisation: "Selbst

dann bin ich die Welt !" (So I myself am the world !). And of this all-embracing consciousness Algernon Blackwood wrote in his *The Centaur* (pp. 250-251): "Once sweep aside the trash and rubbish men seek outside themselves today, and the wings of their smothered souls would stir again. Consciousness would expand. Nature would draw them first. They would come to *feel* the Earth. . . . Self would disappear, and with it this false sense of separateness. The greater consciousness would waken in them. The peace and joy and blessedness of inner growth would fill their lives. But first this childish battling to the death for external things must cease, and Civilisation stand revealed for the bleak and empty desolate thing it really is." Stephen Graham's moving account of tramping through South Russia is full of the shining of this realisation too.

England's inspired singer Shelley wrote in the *Speech of Ahasuerus*: "This whole Of suns and worlds and men and beasts and flowers, With all the silent or tempestuous workings By which they have been, are, or cease to be, Is but a vision;—all that it inherits Are motes of a sick eye, bubbles and dreams. Thought is its cradle and its grave; nor less The future and the past are idle shadows Of thought's eternal flight—they have no being; Nought is but that which feels itself to be." Here we have a complete and clear statement of the 'unreal' and thought-born nature of the universe we perceive. Thomas Merton, the Trappist monk of America, in his *The Ascent to Truth*, writes: "Mysticism embraces the whole interior experience of a soul

immersed in the Absolute. . . . The mystical knowledge of God . . . is above concepts. It is a knowledge that registers itself in the soul passively *without an idea*. . . . It brings with it a deep and inexpressible peace. . . . There exists no word, no idea, that can contain the reality of God" (pp. 40, 61, 68), and we may read carefully the many striking passages from his books quoted in our Appendix.

3. Dr. Bucke's 'Cosmic Consciousness'

Years ago in America, Dr. R. M. Bucke made a study of this glory-consciousness, as exhibited in certain well-known historical personages. He named as certainly enjoying it: the Buddha, Jesus, St. Paul, Plotinus, the Prophet Muhammed, Dante, Las Casas, St. John of the Cross, Bacon, Jacob Boehme, William Blake, Balzac, Whitman and Edward Carpenter; and named others with 'partial illumination': as Moses, Gideon, Isaiah, Lao-Tsü, Socrates, Roger Bacon, Pascal, Spinoza, Swedenborg, Pushkin, Thoreau, Sri Ramakrishna, and supremely the singer of the *Bhagavadgītā*; while he regarded as somewhat doubtful Wordsworth, Emerson and Tennyson. Of course, each may prepare his own list according to his own reading and his own understanding of the state. I have personally met three Westerners who have known it, quite without anyone else suspecting the fact.

Dr. Bucke notes that this state tends to become more frequent as the centuries pass, but that seems more likely to be due to our knowing more of the

recent periods. In an interesting study he shows that our powers have developed one by one in the individual as in the race. The earlier acquired faculties of Consciousness, Memory, Curiosity, the Use of Tools, Shame, Remorse and Humour—some of them going back even to the animal and lower kingdoms—come to us in earliest infancy, and are stable in almost all, being lost only in coma and the deepest sleep. Then comes *Self-Consciousness* at the age of 3, present in about 99.9%, and lost in delirium and coma. Then at 4 the *Colour Sense* dawns, is present in about 98%, and is only rudimentary in dreams, most people dreaming only in black and white. The earlier nations of history had a poorly developed sense of colour, usually having only one word for green and blue, and one for red and brown. The sense of *Fragrance* develops in the child at 5, and is almost never found in dreams; many nations seem to have little sense of it even now, judging by the stenches they allow in their towns, without any apparent discomfort! *Morality* comes at about 15, and appears in man only about 10,000 years ago (?); it is still very unstable and easily lost, as our own post-war experiences prove; it is present in about 94% of humanity, but is found in dreams only in the advanced few. The sense of *Music*, as we understand the word, comes at about 18, having dawned in our race about 6,000 years ago, and is present now in about 45% of humanity but hardly ever found in ordinary dreams. The latest development, *Cosmic Consciousness*, usually dawns only in maturity (*i.e.*, from 33 to 40) and in one or two among millions of people; it can

usually be maintained only for a few hours or minutes at a time.

Today only a very few know the One Self in all, and know themselves as That, but he assures us that that sense will spread until the vast majority can enjoy it in brief flashes, and the few will perpetually live in it; then *all* will attain to that ceaseless bliss, while the few go on yet further into the Infinite Abyss of God.

4. Dr. Winslow Hall's 'Illumination'

A disciple of Dr. Bucke, Dr. W. Winslow Hall, made some independent researches, unhappily confused with unhistorical and purely psychic individuals but certainly describing a few genuine cases living in our own time. Such were 'Abbās Effendi, ('Abdu'l Bahā), Richard Jennings, and the writer of *Christ in You*, a wonderful little book published under the initials "A.M." A questionnaire he sent out elicited certain curious facts noted below:

a. Predisponants: Religious parents, normal high-school education, male sex and middle class, professional life with mingled indoor and outdoor occupations, deep personal affections—helped to prepare the soul for illumination. Book-knowledge, psychic powers, spiritual self-discipline, and conscious meeting with other Illuminates seem to count for little.

b. Determinants, precipitating the Experience, include first broad daylight in beautiful natural scenery,

with a recognition that all comes from God. Open air, a warm climate, and mental agony also tend to it, but earnest prayer, bereavement, national stress, poetry or art rarely bring it on. The average age at which the Ecstasy first appears is at 36.1 years for men and 38 for women; the extreme limits recorded are a boy of 7 and a man of 65. The average time of onset is given as about 9.30 a.m., and over 61% of the cases were in the morning. It often arises from spiritual search, specially when linked with a temporary loss of faith in God, but idle wealth and previous knowledge of its possibility do not at all conduce to the Experience.

c. *The Experience* itself is described as an incomparable deep and strong joy or ecstasy, sometimes with a recognisable period of onset and decline, the former being more often quite sudden. The average length of its duration is 40 minutes, though with many it is less than 5, and a few claim that it lasted for days. The sense of time is usually lost, but the most normal sense is of an intense 'light' either in the self and all around, or on the surfaces of all things, sometimes as within them—like an electric bulb in an alabaster bowl.

d. *After-Effects* are: a permanent and general enhancement of the sense of spiritual well-being, a boundless love for all, and a certain knowledge of God and that *all is one*. At times diseases are suddenly cured, and there is during the ecstasy a notable moral or mental betterment, which continues throughout life. The

impression is permanent, recollection of it at all times bathing the soul in a sense of deep peace and joy.

e. Recurrence is invariable, though it may vary from mere flashes of vision and deep peace to the whole rapture of the Soul into God. Some found that it can be reinduced through the calm contemplation of God or the loving service of Man.

5. Conclusion

I have given here these two long references to books by Western authors who were both medical men, to show that an attempt has been made in the West to study this Awareness with the same scientific precision which other fields of psychology are now receiving. So far as I know, no attempt at such a record has yet been made anywhere in the East, where the Experience itself must surely—given the Predisponants noted above—be more frequent than in the somewhat extroverted and hustled West. It would be interesting if someone here too collected records of similar nature for the enrichment of human knowledge.

Bh. Sri Ramana Maharshi once gave an effective reply to a searching question on this topic. I quote it here from *Maharshi's Gospel I*, published by Sri Ramanashramam at Tiruvannamalai :

" *Q.* : There are times when persons and things take a vague, almost transparent, form, as in a dream. One ceases to observe them as outside, but is passively

conscious of their existence, while not actively conscious of any kind of selfhood. There is a deep quietness in the mind. Is it at such times that one is ready to dive into the Self?

A.: There is Consciousness along with quietness in the mind; this is exactly the state to be aimed at. The fact that the question has been framed on this point, without realizing that it is the Self, shows that the state is not steady but casual. The word 'diving' is appropriate when there are outgoing tendencies, and when therefore the mind has to be directed and turned within, so that there is a dip below the surface of externalities. But when quietness prevails without obstructing the Consciousness, where is the need to dive? If that state has not been realized as the Self, the effort to do so may be called 'diving'." . . . (pp. 29-30)

Allowing for a certain heaviness in style, due to the translator, I believe this gives us a clear norm by which we can recognise the state when it dawns upon ourselves. But English poetry is full of hints of the same vast delight, and almost everything the Irish poet "AE" (George W. Russell) ever wrote proves him a true Illuminate in that divine Consciousness—which is of course only the antechamber to vaster glories far beyond.

6. Samadhi

The water runs along its stony bed
And sings unto the sleepy hills o'erhead
Its ancient tune. The night enfolds tall trees

XCIV

In Silence, while the evening breeze
Sinks slowly down to rest;
And little laughing stars upon the breast
Of God's vast sky peep out and quickly run,
To hide away from the tormenting Sun,
Who has retired behind the cloud-rimmed West.

A strange compelling drives me from the book
Into the forest darkness, and I look
Out and across the shadows of the trees
Into that silent Hall of Mysteries
Where Night is shrined. A stream
Of shining crystal beauty, many-hued,
Sweeps through me, like a fire endued
With myriad powers, a flood agleam
With endless limpid lights. A wind,
A rolling tempest, surges through this little mind
Of mortal manhood, till I find
There is no 'I'
To feel it any more.
There is the sky,
There is the singing shore,
There are the towered hills, the bowing trees,
The stars and rocks, the sleeping breeze—
All these;
But who and where am I?
And what is there to die?

I touch the distant sky
With soaring finger-boughs upon the hill;

XCV

I am the sky,
Which countless diamonds now fill
With shimmered radiance—
And yet I dance
Among the pebbles in this singing stream,
And even dream
I am the serpent in his hidden lair,
The floweret delicate and subtly fair,
The loyal boulders sworn to fealty
Unto this river, bound to wed the sea.

All this am I
That plays God's Game beneath the smiling sky,
And yet I also seem
To dream
I am that swaying human figure there,
Rapt in the light and air
Of sweet omniscience,
Which, void of living sense,
Was wont to say 'I—I', and think
There is no ocean where that 'I' will sink,
With nameless rapture, as the breeze to rest
Upon its ancient Mother's mountained breast.

And so this 'I' is washed in Tapti's mystic flow
Beneath the soft and kindly glow
Of these old stars—which are my eyes—
Engemming vast infinities of Indian skies.

Then, lost in endlessness, I wake to find the same
'I—I' again asserted in a mortal frame,
Imprisoned by gilt bars of form and name.

(13-4-1937)

7. Sources of our Gospel

1. Vasistha

a. (Guru) *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha* (GYV). This great book is discussed in the third part of our Introduction; it is a very voluminous work, naturally with much repetition, and consists of 27,687 couplets (*s'loka*). A few short extracts, derived from Dr. Atreya's [illegible], are used in our GA 16 and 38. So popular did this Scripture prove that a cheaper version, which naturally had to be much smaller, was prepared by the Kashmiri Gauda, Abhinanda, about A.D. 825.

b. Laghu Yoga Vāsiṣṭha (YV), as printed in the text by the Nirnaya Sāgar Press in Bombay, *Samvat* 1944. This is the summary by Abhinanda, who closely followed the design of his original, and like him kept the teaching inextricably mingled with the stories. It includes 6000 couplets in six chapters, of which the second (*Mumukṣu-prakaraṇa*) is quoted in our Gospel as (YV. Mu.) and the others in sequel order of section and couplet.

Sri Rama was found to have lost interest in life on realising its futility, and to rouse him to his royal duties his Guru, Vasiṣṭha, gave the teaching of this book. The style is truly poetic, and the language moderately difficult. By far the most interesting story is that of

King S'ikhidhwaja and his Adept-wife Chuḍala, who at last convinces him that Liberation is in no way incompatible with a life active in the world—the special message of this book. Some therefore believe it to be a refutation of Sankara's insistence on 'renunciation' of the home life. Each story is prefaced by a teaching section, and at the end usually comes an appeal to Rama thus to "act playfully in the world", knowing it is only a dream but that it is right to let the body live out its appropriate life, so that no desires be left unfulfilled.

2. Sri Sankaracharya

A number of minor works generally ascribed to the great Advaita philosopher have been freely drawn upon for our text, without indulging in futile enquiries as to whose hand actually wrote them down.

a. Aparokṣānubhūti (A), of 144 couplets, a powerful exposition of the unreality of the 'world', and an account of how it may be realised by knowledge of the Real Self everywhere.

b. Ātmabodhaḥ (AB), of 68 couplets, said to have been given by the Sage to Sanandana at the deathbed of his Guru, Govinda Bhagavadpāda. It stresses the nature of the Self and tells how it may come to be known directly.

c. Haristotra (HS), of 44 verses, said to have been written at Badrinath while the young Sage spent four years there with Gauḍapāda, his own Guru's teacher. It describes Hari (God) as the indwelling Universal Self.

d. Satas'loki (SS), of 101 verses, also said to have come from the same early period of Sankara's life, outlines the whole Advaita philosophy.

e. Swātma-nirūpaṇam (SN), of 156 verses, is an elaborate 'definition' of the nature of the real Self. It is attributed to the same early period.

f. Tattvopadesa (Tat), of 87 couplets, whereof we use only one (in GA 31 : 4). It is said to have been given to Prithvidhara, son of Prabhākarāchārya the ritualist, at Jhūnsi, when he was won over to be the disciple Hastāmalaka.

g. Viveka Cūḍāmaṇi (VC), of 580 verses. This is one of our two main sources and enjoys the highest possible reverence from all adherents of the Advaita school. It is said to have been written by Sankara after first joining his Guru at Amarakānta on the Nerbudda River, at a time when he was only ten years old. It is a masterpiece of literature and a [illegible] of Advaita doctrine directed, as it says itself, to those who on becoming mature have renounced the world and now seek Liberation. It is generally regarded as the special Scripture of Advaita *sannyāsis* therefore.

Of the seven above works, the writer in Hastings Encyclopaedia accepts (*a*), (*b*) and (*g*) as genuinely by Sankara, though many other scholars think them certainly later. The argument that they 'contradict' teachings in the accepted Commentaries is not valid—for *all* true writing on philosophy is full of paradox,

which seems to the hasty and superficial to be inconsistency. Several show signs of coming from the mind of youth.

3. The Three Gitas

a. Aṣṭāvakra Gītā (AVG) in twenty chapters, all save one being very short, claims to be the teaching of the Sage Ashtavakra (*i.e.*, 'eight times bent') to King Janaka, and it naturally stresses the value of desireless action. It is not quite clear if this is the same Sage who argued with Vandin Ṛshi in the Vana-parva of the *Mahābhārata*. This book has a simple and direct style, with great literary beauty, and at times rises to an ecstatic level on realising that the One Self is all there is. It was highly recommended by Bh. Sri Ramana Maharshi to those who learnt at his feet, and we have made good use of it in compiling our own text.

b. Avadhūta Gītā (AG), that is, the 'Song of the Naked One', ascribed to the divine Sage Dattātreya, consists of 288 couplets in eight chapters; the literary level is high, and the matter suited for those advanced in Yoga. It prescribes as qualifications: a healthy mind, freedom from sensuality, and the willingness to learn from all. Dattatreya himself is said to have had 24 teachers, of every possible grade (cf. the story in *Bhāgavatam* XI).

c. Jīvan Mukti Gītā (JG) is a small but inspired work of 23 couplets, also ascribed to the "holy Dattatreya, Lion of Vedanta". In beautiful verses it describes the mind of the Liberated Soul, the Master.

C

4. The Minor Upanishads

Passages have been drawn from the following 27 Upanishads out of the recognised total of 108; most of these are certainly Advaitic in colour, and some may have been written by disciples of Sri Sankaracharya himself, as suggested in GA 28 : 1.

a. *Adhyātmopaniṣad* (AAU) describes the Inner Self and God, and states that *karma* perishes along with the sense of doership.

b. *Advayatārakopaniṣād* (ATU) describes the true Guru and the way to cross the 'sea of ignorance'.

c. *Akṣyopaniṣad* (AU) is almost bodily found in YV. It gives a detailed account of the Seven Stages of the Path to Wisdom and Freedom.

d. *Amṛtabindopaniṣad* (ABU) says that the same mind which causes bondage leads to liberation when the Real is perceived through contemplation.

e. *Amṛtanādopaniṣad* (ANU) teaches that pure souls attain by the Path of GA 43 while others follow the stages of Yoga in GA 44; six months' steady practice is enough to lead to attainment.

f. *Annapūrṇopaniṣad* (APU) describes God as seen in all Vedantic systems, condemns the psychic powers as irrelevant to spirituality, and names the five delusions: (i) God and the self are different, (ii) the personal self is the doer of actions, (iii) the Soul is attached to its three lower bodies, (iv) God is subject to change, and (v) the world is real.

g. *Brahmavidyopaniṣad* (BVU) teaches how to reach God through the AUM-Hamsa.

h. Darśanopaniṣad (DU) stresses silent prayer, tells how the world and the body were formed, and describes the eightfold Yoga of GA 44.

i. Ekākṣaropaniṣad (EU) teaches that as all are only the Self we must remain *as* that Self, and so be happy always.

j. Mahopaniṣad (MU) gives talks between Suka-Muni and King Janaka, and between Ṛbhu and Nidāgha. We hear how Suka attained to full Truth, and are given a very full account of the same Yoga as we meet in YV. Under the Soul's past desires and tendencies, manifesting as Mind, the Self creates; elements gradually objectify into greater density.

k. Maitrāyanopaniṣad (MrU) tells how mortification (*tapas*), devotion and distaste lead to Realisation; righteousness and a clear mind are essential. The Self enters all beings as vital force (*prāṇa*).

l. Maṇḍalabrahmaṇopaniṣad (MBU) deals in detail with the eightfold Yoga. Sleep dissolves the mind in darkness, while ecstasy dissolves it in the light of full awareness.

m. Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad (M) often classed as one of the Major Upanisad becauses Sankara commented on it with the *Kārikās* of Gaudapada. It shows how the AUM is the key to all knowledge, revealing the trinity of the creating Self present in the Four States.

n. Mudgalopaniṣad (MdU) tells how the Supreme Person can be reached through *puruṣasukta*.

o. Muktikopaniṣad (MkU), clearly one of the latest of all the 108 and containing a list of them all. Herein

Srı Rama teaches Hanumān, His greatest devotee, all he needs to know of the Spiritual Path.

p. Mundakopanisad (MunU) also is often classed as a Major Upanishad; it gives a good outline of Vedantic truth about creation, the Self, etc.

q. Paingalopaniṣad (PU) tells about creation and surveys the whole field of Yoga. How to negate superimpositions, to experience the 'Alone', and the value of brooding on God are dealt with. Then *five* states are given; waking, dreaming, sleeping, fainting, and dying.

r. Pāsupatabrahmopaniṣad (PBU) deals with the sacrifices of Hamsa and the *Sutrātman* or 'subtle self'.

s. S'āṇḍılyopaniṣad (SU), ascribed to the great author of *Bhakti Sutras*, deals with the eightfold path to Knowledge, the psychic force-channels (*nādı*), the AUM, etc.

t. S'ārīrakopaniṣad (SrU) shows that as the 24 elements (*tattvas*) are non-existent God must be seen direct and not through them.

u. Skandopaniṣad (SkU) shows how all is one, and so Sıva, Kesava or Krishna and the Soul are one and the same.

v. Subālopaniṣad (SBU) shows that all are only Narayana (God) and merge into Him at the last. It speaks of creation and absorption, the four states and the seven stages of Yoga, and the identity of the Lord, the Soul and the Fourth (*turya*).

w. Tejobindopaniṣad (TU) contrasts the real life of Spirit (*videhamukti*) and the illusory egoic life, and describes the way to ecstasy. Only when even the conscious

identity with God drops is there true Realisation, for only *He* exists, not one to be identical with Him.

x. Triśikhibrāhmaṇopaniṣad (TBU) tells how world and body were formed, and how the eightfold Yoga leads to Realisation.

y. Varāhopaniṣad (VU) explains the 96 elements, describes the way of Knowledge (*jñānayoga*) with its seven stages, and speaks of the secondless God.

z. Yogaśikhopaniṣad (YSU) shows how knowledge and practice must go together, or we have bogus sages, slaves to passion and unable to concentrate. All pain and fear flee from self-conquest, which is enabled by breath-control and the rousing of *kuṇḍalini*.

za. Yogatattvopaniṣad (YTU) speaks of the Mantra, Laya, Haṭha and Rāja Yogas and their goals, and warns the Yogi never to show off his powers, but to hide his wisdom and pretend to be a fool. Otherwise egoism will again awake in him.

From two more Minor Upanishads we have drawn a few useful Definitions :

zb. Nirālambopaniṣad (NU) in the form of a catechism answers many questions about the Self, etc.

zc. Sarvasāropaniṣad (SSU) defines many things in the form of a catechism.

5. Patanjali

Yoga Sūtras (YSP). From this standard work on the Raja Yoga, we have taken only one verse in GA 44 : 1—a list of the eight stages. In four chapters the author describes in detail the various modes of

mind-control, and the psychic powers which derive from success therein. It should be studied by anyone interested in Spirituality.

8. Definitions and Triplicities

The following definitions, derived from 'Sankara' and from a few of the Minor Upanishads, may be found helpful by the student:

a. Reality. That is *real* (or true) which is not affected in the three times (past, present, future); and they also call that *real* by which the false becomes visibly present. (SS 56-57)

b. The Supreme Self. The Supreme Self (*Param-ātma*) is only God (*Brahma*) manifesting Itself as quite distinct from the body and the like. (NU 7)

c. The Lord. This is the Lord (*Īs'wara*): (He is) only God who has assumed His own Power described as Nature (*prakṛti*), created the worlds, and in the form of Inner Ruler entered (them) through controlling the intellect and senses of beings from the Creator downwards. (NU 4)

d. Nature. Nature (*Prakṛti*) is God's (creative) Power in the form of intellect (*buddhi*), with skill to create various wonderful worlds out of nothing but God. (NU 6)

e. The Soul. The Soul (*jīva*) under the influence of a false identification says, "I am the gross (creation) composed of names and forms like Brahma, Vishnu, Is'āna, Indra, and so on—that 'I', in fact one, through

the body's differentiating influence (becomes) many souls. (NU 5)

f. The Ignorant. The deluded *Fool* is the one with a fixed egoistic motion (*bhāvanā*) that he is the doer (and experiencer). (NU 33)

g. This is *Hell*: Hell is only the companionship of people (devoted to) unreal objects of the world. (NU 17)

h. And this is *Heaven*: Heaven is companionship with the good. (NU 16)

i. Self-sacrifice: Self-sacrifice (*tyāga*) is the (dropping of the) form of the world through perceiving the Mind-Self (*cidātma*). (A. 106)

j. That is known as a *Solitary Place* wherein there is no person(al ego) in the beginning and end, and in the middle, and by which this (universe) is always pervaded. (A 110)

k. There is no better supreme state than the *Silence* after giving up all desires (and habitual thoughts). (YV 18 : 29) Let the Illumined be always that Silence from which mind and thought fall back baffled, which is attainable by Yogis. . . . The mere silence of speech is prescribed by God-knowers for children. (A 107, 109)

l. Devotion: Among things bringing about Liberation Devotion alone is the most important; the search for one's own Natural State (*svarūpa*) is what is called 'Devotion'; while others hold that Devotion is seeking into the truth of one's own Self. (VC 31-32)

m. The truly *Learned* is he who realises the Natural State which is within all (beings). (NU 32)

n. Liberation. The dissolution of 'mineness' in all the fields of fleeting objects of the world's joy and sorrow, through enquiry into permanent and fleeting things : this is Liberation. (Nu 29)

o. As to the meaning of *Bliss*: The [illegible] [illegible], ocean of bliss of the Natural State, the bright awareness of joy, and a form of joy left over (beyond that)—this is called Bliss. (SSU 12)

The following set of *Triplicities* may be found interesting by some readers, who may derive intellectual pleasure from [illegible] them. They are derived from various Minor Upanishads.

Letters of AUM	A	U	M
Forms of 'God'	Brahma	Vishnu	Siva Mahes'-vara
Qualities	Rajas	Sattva	Tamas
Natures	Active	Rhythmic	Inert
Colours	Fiery Orange	White	Black
Worlds	Earth	[illegible]	Heaven
Planes	Bhuḥ	Bhuvaḥ	Swaḥ
Lords	Fire	Air	Sun
Queens	Gayatri	Savitri	Sarasvati
Times	Past	Present	Future
Breaths	*Pūraka* (IN)	*Kumbhaka* (HELD)	*Recaka* (OUT)

Letters of AUM	A	U	M
Bodies	Sthūla	Sūkṣma	Kāraṇa (?)
Aspects	Physical	Emotional	Mental
Centres	Eye	Throat	Heart
Characters	Desire	Action	Knowledge
States	Waking	Dream	Sleep
Self	Vaiśvānara	Taijasa	Prājña
Vedas	Ṛg	Yajuḥ	Sāma
Fires	Garhapatya	Dakṣina	Ahavanīya

A BRIEF ADVAITA CATECHISM

1. *How did this Universe come into existence?*

If it exists at all, by the concretising of a strong thought in God's universal Mind. "God shines as the world" (GYV 3 : 12 : 2).

2. *What is God?*

The infinite, ineffable, absolute, eternal All-Self, Source and End of all, manifested in all, and in no way different from all.

3. *How did He create the Universe?*

In His infinite Mind spontaneously arose a thought-wave picturing this Universe in total detail; under His divine creative power this thought assumed perceptible form and thus veiled His Real Being from the beings enclosed in that Universe.

4. *Has this Universe any real existence?*

As it arises in the Mind of absolute Reality, it *has* a real underlying existence, but the world as *we* see it is distorted by our own memories, fears, desires and habitual modes of thought. As we discard these, we come nearer to a view of the *real* Universe as it exists in God's Mind.

5. *Is Matter eternal?*

No; in fact it has never at all existed. What we call Matter is a whirling vortex of thought-powers

moulded into ever-changing shapes by the breezes of imagination.

6. *What is the Individual Soul?*

God clothes Himself in thought-born bodies and lives in a mind-born world; this is the Soul. Its innate knowledge of its real divinity is hidden by these obvious forms, so that it dreams itself separate from the One Universal Self.

7. *How does it 'come into existence'?*

Misled by the veiling of the Divine Self and attracted by the beauties of the mind-born 'world', the innate Selfhood is expressed by a false assertion of the limited 'I', while it claims as its own certain of the objects it perceives.

8. *What is Sin?*

The timeless ignorance of the false egoism which dreams itself to be apart from God and chooses between the dream-objects of 'worldly' life.

9. *How did that Ignorance 'come into being'?*

God dreamed us into existence, and His creative power innate in us dreams other forms into being within our own mind-world; then we forget that we as 'individuals' are only shadow-phantoms in God's Mind.

10. *Is it inevitable in any Universe?*

Without the initial mind-activity there would be no Universe at all; when mind ceases to imagine 'outer things' or a world, the Universe at once vanishes, and God alone is known. So the ignorance of the ego-mind is inevitable if a 'world' is to exist.

11. *Is the Soul identical, or one, with God?*

It is identical in the sense that a wave is of identically the same water as the sea; yet while it is a wave, it cannot claim to be the sea. When the wave subsides, the sea alone *is*. The Soul cannot exist apart from God, as the wave cannot be taken out of the sea. Yet it is not God in His Fullness, so long as it feels itself a Soul.

12. *How did it get caught up in bodies?*

God's innate Selfhood falsely identifies itself with, and relates itself to, what it perceives. Seeing a body and aware of its feelings, it says, "This is mine", and can no longer shake off the illusory connection.

13. *How can the Soul become free?*

By ceasing to identify himself with the bodies he has so long falsely imagined his own, and realising himself to be really the Cosmic Self that uses *all* existent bodies, and so to be immortal and universal.

14. *Can he do this unaided?*

Yes, but he may be greatly helped by God's grace when his mind matures and, through long practice of inner dissociation from sense-objects, becomes strong enough to concentrate wholly on the inner Formlessness.

15. *How does God's grace help him towards Freedom?*

He provides saintly company, spiritual guidance through the scriptures, the power of correct reasoning, and a sudden unexpected experience of Reality from time to time.

16. *What is the Bondage he thus escapes?*

Egoism that forgets the real Self, limiting itself by narrow vision to the bodily environment and

powers, taking that to be the self, and so desiring or detesting objects and events from the personal point of view.

17. *And what is the Freedom he attains?*

The eternally blissful experience of omnidentity[1] free from ego, desire and anxiety, and living wholly without relationship to objects and events in this shadow-world, being merged wholly in God.

18. *All being God, why do not all at once become free?*

Because most Souls are still dazzled by the attraction of sense objects and chase after them. When they cease from this folly, all Souls will at once be freed from the illusion of separateness.

19. *Are man's thoughts his own?*

To a great extent. He sees the world created by his own ideas, and can never really perceive the world of another's fancy. But thought itself is a vast universal ocean of Mind, wherein the 'water' constantly flows freely from one wave-form to another.

20. *Can man choose aright?*

Yes. The same mind which fancied its egoistic world can realise the true underlying world of Reality, and choose to live in that blissful awareness.

21. *How does man find God?*

By ceasing to imagine the separate ego or world, he finds that God alone *is*. Stopping the wheel of thought, he knows God in the Silence.

22. *Where is God Himself?*

[1] *i.e.*, being the 'All'.

the Divine State, he helps the aspirant to persevere until attainment on the chosen path.

29. *What are the Qualifications for the Path ?*

An intense longing to tread it, a clear perception of what will help or hinder the treading, a resolute rejection of everything but God the One Self, and the virtues of a pure mind and devoted heart.

30. *Is it necessary to renounce the 'world' ?*

That 'world' is only a fancy of the ego-mind, which alone hides Reality from view. This mind alone is to be totally renounced—which does not imply any change in place or activity of the body, though at some stage the aspirant *may* withdraw into lonely spots in search of quietness so that the mind may there be more easily stilled.

31. *What are the means to Realisation ?*

The practice of a living Affirmation of innate divinity, detachment from all 'exteriors', control of mind and bodies, devotion to the One Self or God, and the ceaseless practice of the non-egoic 'Natural State'. All these are greatly aided by pure thoughts and kind deeds.

32. *How can the Final Truth be known ?*

By direct and ecstatic intuitive experience of the self as the Universal Self or God, and then living wholly thus merged in the Divine. This involves the loss of all ego-sense, the cessation of forming plans, opinions and desires for sense-objects, and the seeing of everything as equal to and totally disconnected from the self.

33. *Is there such a thing as Fate ?*

What we call fate or destiny is absolutely the result of our own past desires and motivated actions. We create our own 'world' entirely, and we can wholly remodel ourselves and our environment by the use of creative thought or will.

34. *Who are the Gods ?*

Individual souls fitted to live on the 'higher planes' and with powers greater than human; they too are creatures of the mind's imagining, unreal.

35. *Is there value in worshipping Personal Gods ?*

Yes, at an early stage such worship tends to purify the mind and train it in a concentration which will later help it to transcend thought and so enter the Silence, wherein the Real can alone be found.

36. *Is the Universe good or bad ?*

In a real or absolute sense it does not exist. Its appearance is indifferent in itself, and hinders Realisation only when the Soul's unwary fancy imposes on it a fictitious actuality. By resisting the strong pull of the 'world', the Soul gains strength required for the Quest of God.

37. *Does any Hell exist ?*

As separative life is unnatural for the Soul, it is all a kind of Hell. There are also unpleasant states of mind more hellish than others, and these are reached by means of evil thoughts, words and deeds.

38. *What happens, then, to wicked men ?*

The deliberate choice of egoism instead of the Universal Self is wickedness; such Souls plunge themselves deeper into the misery of endless rebirth in

wretched conditions, on this physical earth or on hidden 'planes'.

39. *Is there any Devil in the Advaita?*

No, as the name of this Religion implies, there is only ONE, and that One is the Absolute, beyond all possible conceptions of good and evil.

40. *What is death?*

The real death is a slipping away from ceaseless abidance in the Divine Self. What men call 'death' is only the fading out of one dream-world as another appears, which seems equally real and substantial so long as it endures.

41. *What happens to the ordinary Soul after death?*

After the brief swoon of shock at the change, it finds itself in another Time-Space order or 'world', moulded out of its own habitual thoughts and desires. It lives in this world until that too fades out on the dawning of another, and so until it eventually finds itself reborn in flesh.

42. *Does the Soul re-enter bodies after death?*

It is 'reborn' at once in the subtle world, where it uses subtle bodies which seem to it as solid as the physical does to us. When drawn back by desire for enjoyment or the fear of trouble, it again takes on a physical body in the world of flesh.

43. *When does reincarnation cease?*

When the Soul no longer desires anything which can be had only on these 'lower planes', and seeks only God or the Self, then it has no longer any cause to imagine a world and so create a rebirth.

44. *What is the Final Goal of all life?*

The restoration of perfect realisation of the ONE, beyond whom nothing at all exists, and the eternal living in that total freedom from all illusion of separateness.

45. *Is this a Dualist Religion?*

The very idea of "TWO" is the original error which brings about the gloom of ignorance and separation, as the cat seeing her own image in a mirror thinks it is another cat. The truth is that there never is but ONE, and in that ONE is latent the infinite multiplicity of creative Mind. Having perceived that ONE, the mind is lost therein, and multiplicity disappears for evermore. Really, there never was any Individual Soul, or bondage, or ignorance, or liberation; GOD alone *is*. When mind ceases to create new fancies, He alone is seen as the All.

46. *Can you sum up this Religion in a few words?*

As its name implies, it is a powerful affirmation of the absolute UNITY as sole existence, to be realised by personal experience in a bliss beyond words as a direct and total merging in GOD. Any attempt to describe this ecstasy, or the ONE BEING, in words must fail, for the "mind is the slayer of the Real"; nor can the Truth be established by argument or mental cleverness, which further conceal it from the Soul.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A	Aparokṣānubhūti
AAU	Adhyātmopaniṣad
AB	Ātmabodha
ABU	Amṛtabindopaniṣad
A.D.	Year after Christ
AG	Avadhūta Gītā
ANU	Amṛtanādopaniṣad
APU	Annapūrṇopaniṣad
ATU	Advayatārakopaniṣad
AU	Akṣyopaniṣad
AVG	Aṣṭāvakra Gītā
B.C.	Year before Christ
Bh.	Bhagavān, the Lord
BVU	Brahmavidyopaniṣad
cf.	compare with
cir., c.	about
Com.	Commentary
Dr.	Doctor
DU	Darśanopaniṣad
Eccl.	Ecclesiastes
etc.	and others
EU	Ekākṣaropaniṣad
ft.	feet

GA	Gospel of Advaita
GGS	Gospel of Guru-Granth Saheb
GH	Gospel of Hermes
GJ	Gospel of Jesus
GMC	Gospel of the Mystic Christ
GN	Gospel of Narada
GYV	original Yoga Vāsiṣṭha
HS	Hari-stuti
i.e.	that is
JG	Jīvanmukti Gītā
lit.	literally
M	Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad
MBU	Maṇḍalabrāhmaṇopaniṣad
MdU	Mudgalopaniṣad
MkU	Muktikopaniṣad
MrU	Maitrāyanopaniṣad
MunU	Mundakopaniṣad
NU	Nirālambopaniṣad
op. cit.	last work by him quoted
p. pp.	page, pages
PBU	Pās'upatabrahmopaniṣad
Ps.	Book of Psalms
PU	Paiṅgalopaniṣad
R	Translator of Viveka Cūḍāmani (Swami Madhavananda)
SBU	Subālopaniṣad
Skt.	Sanskrit text reads
SkU	Skandopaniṣad
SN	Svātma-nirūpaṇam
SrU	S'ārīrakopaniṣad

SS	S'atas'loki
SSU	Sarvasāropaniṣad
SU	S'āṇḍilyopaniṣad
Tat.	Tattvopades'a
TBU	Tris'ikhibrahmaṇopaniṣad
TU	Tejobindopaniṣad
U	Translator of Minor Upanishads (T. R. Srinivasa Ayyangar)
V	Translator of Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha Laghu (K. Narayanswami Aiyar)
VC	Viveka Cuḍāmani
VU	Varāhopaniṣad
YSP	Yoga Sūtras of Patanjali
YSU	Yogas'ikhopanisad
YTU	Yogatattvopaniṣad
YV	Yoga Vāsiṣṭha (short version)

SYNOPSIS

Chapter One : GOD. 1. The whole universe is nothing but the Ineffable God, the One Reality ; 2 as He, the Universal Self, permeates and encloses all, nothing is unreal or apart from Him. 3. Such a Universal God can be worshipped by every self only through realising oneness with Him, when purified of egoism by adoring the Personal Ideal in any beloved form. 4. God is all in all, and to know Him is to be free from all the stains of ignorance.

Chapter Two : THE WORLD. 5. Stage by stage the whole universe spontaneously appears in God, souls manifesting from Him like sparks in a flame. 6 The [illegible] world arises and vanishes in Him like a bubble in the waves. 7. It is really only mind and is there whenever there is a mind to perceive it ; it is no more substantial than dreamland itself, 8. and disappears when mind ceases to act. So if we stop the mind we can realise what precedes creation. 9. Time and Space, Birth and Death, the karma-produced lives beyond, are all mental projections, unreal as dreams, 10. for the *only* Reality is the Unmanifest God Himself, self-radiant everywhere. Bondage, soul-growth and spiritual unfoldment are all illusory, for the eternally Perfect alone exists.

Chapter Three : THE SOUL. 11. Differentiated as a focus of Divine life, the soul is charmed with the world's beauties and, trying to claim them for herself, is caught up in them. 12. Really the soul is only God's image, the One Self ; to know her identity with everything in Him is to be free from the illusory separate self and to 'see' God. 13. Egoism is to be gradually refined out of

self-identification with personality and body into self-identity with the Universe and with God, its Self. 14. Only the false egoism hides from us the glory of the Immanent; we choose among forms assumed by God, and these preferences blind us to His omnipresence in all alike. 15. The false idea that the personality is the self, alien to the world seen as if outside, is the cause of our misery. 16. When we can be what we will, why not will to be free and ever-blissful? 17. Fools believe themselves bound and try in many ways to get free; the wise know they are eternally free, being essentially one with God, and make no struggle.

Chapter Four: BONDAGE AND FREEDOM. 18. Waking, dreaming, sleeping, the same one self experiences all, whose real life transcends them all. 19. To the deluded soul seven modes of consciousness are open and plunge him ever deeper towards oblivion. 20. Perceiving a world, the mind thinks it real, likes some things and dislikes others, and so is tossed by its own ideas restlessly to and fro until self-centred thought is ended. 21. Bondage lies in this ceaseless thinking, this preference of one over another, which swings the mind between hope and fear, desire and repulsion. 22. Regrets and desires distort the mind's view of the world, and from life to life imprison it in its own concepts. 23. Being simply self-centred thought, mind must be destroyed by perfect equanimity and impartiality; then all prejudices vanish, and the *real* world, which is God Himself, is seen in all alike. 24. All acts from motive tend to greater bondage; actions without the thought of self are free, spontaneous and divine. 25. Freed from fear, desire and regret, the soul is always happy whatever comes, knowing that all alike is only God.

Chapter Five: WHO CAN BE SAVED? 26. The ignorant are always unstable, while the wise rest in the Natural State free of thought. 27. God is infinitely attractive; leave all else and abide in Him and life will be ever-joyous. 28. The highest Truth is to be given only to a purified and selfless aspirant, 29. who is

already mature and full of graces, desireless and eager to find Reality alone. 30. A true Guide helps the intelligent seeker in the search, one who meditates on spiritual teachings. 31. He should serve a competent and kindly Guide, blameless and wise, in whom God appears to him; by such he can be awakened to the Truth. 32. Scriptures have their value, but one should not be lost in their endless verbiage; nothing is essential but to seek the Self within the heart. 33. Direct experience of that Self is the only real way to know the Truth; that can be gained by practising the wisdom of the Guide that teaches that all is the One God.

Chapter Six: **ENTERING THE PATH.** 34. The seeker must know what is worth having, reject all else, be wholly steady in the search, and desire supremely the One Reality, God, the Self. 35. Success is ensured by a quiet withdrawal from the world's excitements into fixity in practising the Guide's teachings. 36. Calm and silent effort dissolves the obscuring clouds of desire for a name as sage or scholar or for physical comfort, and the tendency to excess even in good things. 37. The mind is to be refined by patient effort in saintly company, replacing ignoble with noble thoughts, and then transcending thought itself. 38. We are what we have made ourselves, and we can mould ourselves anew into selfless and childlike sages if we will; 39. but this demands an unremitting effort to dissolve the agelong habit of self-centred thinking. 40. Steady abidance in the Natural State beyond thought reveals God, the Universal Self, in all His bliss. 41. As we fashion our own world after our own mind, its ideas and desires, it is futile to flee to forests if we carry a restless mind with us there; it matters little what the body does or where it lives, the inner attitude matters profoundly. 42. The door to Freedom may be opened to us by Peacefulness, Conscious Search, Surrender, or the Company of a Saint.

Chapter Seven: **MEANS OF ATTAINMENT.** 43. Study of the Truth partly expressed in words leads to our pondering it

and being silently absorbed in it; when all idea of our selves as thinking of it drops, Ecstasy supervenes. 44 Ecstasy is attained by bringing senses and mind, limbs and breath under control, and then gradually withdrawing into the Silence. 45. That Ecstasy is the soul's thought-free Natural State, without limitation or separateness, wherein God alone is known as the One Reality—a state of infinite and eternal bliss at being merged in Him.

Chapter Eight: THE SEVEN COURTS 46. During ages of rebirths the worldly prefers pleasures to the lofty bliss of God-Realisation, 47 till he wearies of life's troubles and decides to seek Eternal Reality by the practice of virtue, gentle ways, the study of Scripture, and the company of saintly men. 48. He enters deep into spiritual learning, sheds defects and develops intuition; 49. as he delights in things of the Spirit, he begins to despise worldliness, and spends all his time on the Quest; no longer worrying over outer events, he dives deep in the sweetness of the Self. 50. So he comes to be known as a Saint whose very glance inspires others, and even if he rests here he will continue his progress in a later favourable birth. 51. Being wholly engrossed in the inner world of spiritual Reality, he now sees everything outside as a dream, 52. and is thus driven more swiftly inward to the endless Fount of Bliss, so that he seems asleep to the outer world, 53. which he hardly notices any more, acting in it like a somnambulist while his whole mind is drowned in the Divine Bliss found in himself. 54. No longer can he hold a separate body; he joyously plunges into that Infinity, and the 'apartness' of the individual perishes for ever in the Immortal Self. 55. The goal of these seven stages is the only thing worthy of pursuit in the world.

Chapter Nine: INFINITE PERFECTION. 56. When all separate thought has ceased, the Soul, now united consciously with the entire universe, is for ever washed with perfect bliss. 57. Wholly free from defect or limitation, without a personal ego,

the eternal and infinite Self is a friend to all and enjoys moveless calm joy, the very incarnation of blissful Godliness. 58. Totally merged in God, he is immanent in all and infinitely aware beyond all Time and Space. 59. So he freely moves among men, playfully shedding love and grace on everyone, being all things to all men as circumstances may require. 60. Desireless and ever at perfect peace, he is a source of boundless happiness to all; who can understand his free mind, bathed in Divine wisdom and perpetual beauty? 61. Destiny prevails no more on him, no laws of Nature bind him now; he appears on earth at his own will solely to bless all beings living there, and no act of his reacts upon himself 62. Lost in the ecstasy of a loving embrace with God, his acts are done by God in God—there is no 'I' any more for him! 63. And when the body, called by Nature, drops away he remains merged entirely in the Divine Abyss, and nothing is left behind. 64. Vainly does the Adept try to tell of his consciousness of that perfect unity of God—it is beyond all words 65. Only as he fades into the light of that endless Glory, he implores his human brothers to tread the Path that he has gone, and so like him to become the ecstasy of God.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: GOD

CHAPTER TWO: THE WORLD

THE ADHIKAR

" I am bound and would be freed ! " he who thus resolves, (being) neither wholly ignorant nor a knower of the Real,[1] is ready for this book. (YV. 1 : 2)

It is usual for Sanskrit books on philosophy to state in some such way the persons who are qualified to read them, it being well understood that premature enlightenment is futile.

The wholly ignorant cannot understand the Truth if it be shown to him ; one who himself already knows the Truth neither needs nor cares to read in books. That is why it is only those who are aware of their own limitations and defects, who yearn for that freedom instinctively felt to be the right of every spiritual being, who can study the Advaita Truth in books such as these.

[1] *nātyantamajño notajjñaḥ*

PRELUDE

The Mandukya alone is quite enough to free those who long for Freedom, but (if) even (after reading that the mind) does not attain[1] to Wisdom, (one should) study the Ten Upanishads. (MkU. 1 : 1 : 26-27)

The Mandukyopanishad

1. AUM, this Word[2] is the whole (universe); its clear meaning is Past, Present and Future. Indeed all is the (utterance of) AUM,[3] and whatever else is beyond the 'Three Times', that also is truly the (utterance of) AUM.[3] For all this (universe) is God, this Self is God. (M. 1-2)

2. Now this Self has four Aspects.[4] The *Waker*, whose sphere (of activity) is the

[1] *lit*: unsuccessful, unessential (*asiddham*)

[2] *or*: letter, *or*: immortal (*akṣaram*)

[3] *lit*: the making of the AUM (*aumkāra*)

[4] *catuṣpāt*; *lit*: 'four feet', but the word is often used for 'parts', 'sections'. As the Self is impartible, I have preferred the word 'aspects'.

Waking State, (who is) conscious of the outer (world), with seven limbs[1] and nineteen means of contact[2] to enjoy solid (objects), is the First Aspect. The *Dreamer*, whose sphere is Dream, (who is) aware of the inner (world), with seven limbs and nineteen means of contact to experience the subtle (objects), is the Second Aspect. Where the sleeper neither desires[3] anything at all nor sees any dream, that is (deep) Sleep; the *Sleeper*, whose sphere is (such a) sleep, (who is) onefold and a (mass of) intense awareness only,[4] is happily experiencing bliss (while) the mind faces Knowledge, is the Third Aspect. This is the lord of all, this the knower of all, this the inner ruler, this the womb of all, because (it is) the Source and End of beings. (M. 2-6)

3. Not conscious of the inner and unaware of the outer (world), unconscious of both, not

[1] The seven 'limbs' are given by Sankara as: head, eyes, breath, mouth, trunk, urinary-genital organs, feet.

[2] The fourteen 'mouths' or 'faces' (*mukha*), are given by Sankara as: five sense organs (ear, skin, eye, tongue, nose), five motile organs (mouth, hands, penis, anus, feet (?)), five vital airs (*prāṇa*, *apāna*, *samāna*, *vyāna*, *udāna*) and four-fold inner powers (mind, intellect, memory, egoism).

[3] Dream is here definitely associated with desire, as in much modern psychology. See the Introduction

[4] *ekībhūtaḥ prajñānaghana*.

vividly aware, neither conscious nor unconscious, unseen and unrelated[1] (to other things), to be neither grasped nor defined, unthinkable and unnamable, the sole essence of Self-consciousness, worldless,[2] still, blissful, secondless —(Him) they count the Fourth.[3] He is the Self, He is (the one) to be known. (M. 7)

4. He is the same Self of the AUM taken in syllables—the 'A', the 'U' and the 'M' viewed as letters; the Aspects (correspond to) the letters and the letters (to) the Aspects. The *Waker*, whose sphere is the Waking State, is 'A', the first letter, because he pervades all and is the first; he who knows this (Aspect) truly fulfils all desires and becomes the first (of all). The *Dreamer*, whose sphere is Dream, is the 'U', the second letter, because it excels or comes in the middle; he who knows this (Aspect) certainly excels in knowledge and becomes equal to all, (for) none is born into his family ignorant of God. The *Sleeper*, whose sphere is (Deep)

[1] *adṛṣṭamavyavahāryam*

[2] *i.e.* not seeing any world, for the mind is in that state wherein no world is created ([illegible]).

[3] *caturtham*, more usually called *Turya*, a word of the same meaning.

Sleep, is the third letter 'M', because it is both the measure[1] and that wherein all become one; he who knows this (Aspect) certainly comprehends all and takes all into himself. Likewise he who knows this, the Fourth (Aspect) soundless,[2] transcendent, unmanifest,[3] still, blissful, secondless,[4] the very (utterance of) the AUM—the self who knows This enters the SELF by means of the self (alone).[5] (M. 8-12)

This Upanishad, often used as the essential text in Advaita [illegible]. is generally said to be extremely hard to understand. But surely that difficulty comes rather from what has been read into it by many theorists bent on creating difficulties which will prove their own cleverness in solving them. Let us turn away from all previous commentators, and see just what the text actually has to say to us; we shall find it quite clear and straightforward.

First, it declares that the whole universe is triune in nature; there are three phases of Time united in Eternity—just as there are the three *triputi*'s: seer, seen and sight, etc., the triplicity imminent in all manifested being: two, and the [illegible] between them.

[1] *or*: proof.

[2] *lit*: without parts.

[3] *i.e.* not seeing any world, for the mind is in that state wherein no world is created (*prapancopas'amam*).

[4] *i.e.* simple, the same everywhere; there is no other to modify or affect it.

[5] *i.e.* unaided.

When the relationship becomes infinitely close, the two become One, and manifestation ceases. This triunity is symbolised in the *Praṇava*, AUM or OM, the Creative Word uttering the Unmanifest; all that is, is only THAT. And herein lies the whole Advaita revelation: *All* that is, is only THAT.

That is the One Self; it functions in four ways. The essential way is *as* the Self, and we shall speak of that presently. But in the common experience of men the Self is found active in the three states of consciousness: Waking, Dream and Sleep. Of those states, as understood in the light of modern research, we have said something in the [illegible]; here we confine ourselves to what the Upanishad teaches us.

Awake to the 'outer world', aware of the objects of sense assumed to be distinct from the senser himself, with various senses and organs of perception and activity alert—the Self is said to be the Waker, or *Vais'vānara*. This is the only self the ignorant man accepts as his self at all, looking on himself in the other states as in some way 'strange' or 'alien' to himself.

Asleep to that 'outer world', but aware of a strange and ever-changing world within the mind, wherein he acts with powers and feelings that differ from those of the Waking state, but with organs and senses analogous to those used therein—the Self is said to be the Dreamer, or *Taijasa* (the 'brilliant': cf. the word 'astral' or 'starry' used for the same world of dream). In this state the sleeper sees visions, thinks, acts in accordance with his (secret) desires; he fulfils ambitions, punishes foes, finds the lost, etc. By the ignorant man in the world, this state is looked down on, because many of those wishes he would not care to avow openly to others—not a few being associated with the hungers of the flesh, as Freud insisted. Nor are his actions or experiences there subject to the will of the conscious waking self.

Asleep alike to the 'outer' and this 'inner' or mental world, wrapped in a calm unawareness of everything but himself and therefore oblivious of all relationships with that self, thus free from all anxiety, fear and enmity, from hope, regret and all desire—resting in that blissful 'unconsciousness' to all but the self alone, the Sleeper, or *Prājña*, enjoys the [illegible] bliss of 'deep sleep'. And this we are told, and herein modern psychology agrees with the ancient seers, is the 'Lord of all', the 'Collective Unconscious' of Jung, in whose silent depths God, Source and End of all beings, may be found by the patient seeker.

Passing beyond even this happy state, the seeker knows himself in that ineffable 'Fourth State', *Turya*, wherein he is unaware equally of the 'without' and the 'within', unaware even of his own [illegible], and yet fully conscious to the Reality which is Awareness absolute. Such a state obviously cannot be spoken of in words; it can only be vaguely hinted at by negatives and must be realised in practice. This is the '*Neti Neti*' of the Veda, neither this nor that, inexpressible save as the 'Void' or the 'Nirvāṇa' of some schools. It is the 'Great Dark' of the Dionysian tradition in Western Mysticism, 'dark' only because its Light cannot be seen by eyes or understood by mind. This is the ONE, the immanent SELF of all, the SELF in in whom all subsist; we name That Unutterable 'GOD', because to speak of It we must use some term, however futile and inadequate it be.

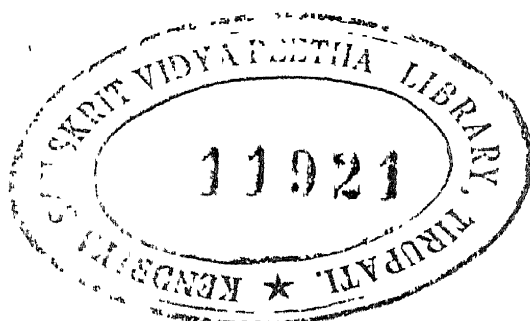
This is the ONE SELF manifested as the AUM in this triune universe; each of the three 'letters' of this Creative Word expresses one aspect of the Self—Waking, Dreaming, and Asleep. For the 'individual' Self cannot be divided, even for analysis; it is the Monad, the 'Advaita', non-dual one, the 'Kaivalya' that *alone* exists.

The *Waker* is expressed by the first letter 'A', because his state is first experienced, even by the most ignorant of earthly beings; as representing God manifest in the 'outer world', it is everywhere in that world, all-pervading, omnipresent. One in full control of this Waking state achieves his ambitions, conquers others, attains all he wants.

The *Dreamer* is expressed by the second letter 'U', because his is the middle state, as the sound of 'U' comes from the middle of the mouth. As this corresponds to the '[illegible] self', to the hidden desires and memories, knowledge of its nature truly gives man control over himself and the ability to seek out that 'God' who is hidden below the inmost strata of the 'Unconscious Self'.

The *Sleeper* is expressed by the third letter 'M', because this terminates the 'word' of creation and utters the silence wherein all 'outer' and 'inner' things merge into the Unconscious depths of the Self. To understand and fully perceive this state, to be aware of the Self as functioning therein, is indeed to know *all*, for therein all is one, nothing existing there save the One Self.

It is the summation of these three, the soundless 'point' of Divinity which in Sanskrit closes the writing of the word 'AUM', which represents the Unmanifest, Infinite and Eternal Self, known as pure SELF alone, beyond expression, beyond all utterance or the first vibration of creative power. To know THIS is indeed to *be* that SELF in all Its fullness, to be merged therein, identified with THAT for evermore.



CHAPTER ONE

GOD

God, or as the Advaita texts usually name Him, Brahman (a neuter noun), is naturally the subject of the opening chapter of this 'Gospel'. In it is declared the whole teaching of Advaita: that He is One, and there is none else anywhere at all. That He is therefore equally everywhere, in all, outside of all, the very self and form of all; and that no worship of Him can be real save the expression of Him in heart and mind and life, as all in all. Knowing that this alone is true Knowledge, the devotee of Truth cannot but delight at all times in His sole existence as the Reality beyond all the shadow-forms we may imagine.

1. God Alone Is

1. All this (universe) is certainly God; . . . whatever exists down here is only He.[1] (MU. 6 : 12-13) There is no other material cause of the world[2] but God, so all this world is God alone and nothing else. What pervades and

[1] U reads: What is in Him, that alone exists. The text runs: *samastam khalvidam Brahma . . . yadastīha tadevāsti*

[2] *Skt*: *upādānam prapancasya*

is pervaded is false, (for) according to Scripture everything is the Self. (YSU. 4 : 3-4) Everything derived from[1] the True God is also true;[2] not even a speck of this (universe) can be otherwise.[3] The delusion of one who says it is has not gone, he babbles like a sleeper. (VC. 230)

2. This whole universe which is ignorantly seen as manifold is all only God, and altogether beyond the bounds of thought; (VC. 227) and that wholly pure and tranquil All-Self beyond perception is full of Being-Awareness-Bliss[4] passing knowledge down here. (YV. 29 : 18)

We lay our foundation on the Oneness, the essential Truth behind all seeming multiplicity. We begin our 'Gospel' with the same fundamental with which it is to close—the one Truth to which all philosophies, all mystical experiences lead.

As God alone exists, *i.e.* is independent, IS in His own right, beyond all we can conceive of as 'Being'—everything except God can have no *real* independent existence. All we sense as 'outside' us, this objective

[1] *lit* : effect, work of.

[2] *sadbrahmakāryam sakalam sadevam* : Note that it is Sankara who here so forcibly expresses the *real* existence of the 'world' in at least one sense.

[3] R reads: Its essence is That, and apart from It it does not exist.

[4] *Saccidānanda*, the usual term for the Triune Supreme.

universe, is nothing but that One SELF whom, for want of a real name, we call 'GOD' or 'BRAHMAN', the all-extending Reality. So too the whole subjective universe, dimly perceived within the 'individual self', is not other than He. All, all, all is God, the One and Only REAL. So there is nothing absolutely false, there is no inherent 'illusion'. for when there is nothing at all but the One REALITY, all must be *real*. It is our false seeing, our misunderstanding, which is the 'illusion' of which some self-styled Advaitins speak. This whole universe, within and without, is only God, the TRUE and ETERNAL GOD, the only ONE.

Because the universe is itself the ONE, the Infinite Eternal, no human mind can ever hope fully to perceive its [illegible] beauty, to taste to the uttermost its transcendent bliss. Beyond thought and perception, beyond the reach of the most daring imagination, that Wonder stretches out into endless inexhaustible perfection. Eternity itself can but unveil the outer surface of that Infinity; its centre, its living heart can never be known by 'separate' or 'individual' souls. God alone knows Himself.

2. He is Omnipresent

1. There is only the one sole God, whose real nature is ineffable[1] and beyond mind and speech; in Him there is no variety[2] at all. (VC. 469) This supreme ONENESS is real,[3] and beyond (HIM) there is nothing else, for

[1] *or*: incomprehensible (*anirūpya*)

[2] *i e*, duality. "In Him is no shadow of turning, no variation at all."

[3] *sadidam paramādvaitam*.

in the state of realising the highest Truth no other thing whatever exists.[1] (VC. 226) The Self is here, there too is the Self, (MU. 6 : 10) the whole world is full of the Self (TU. 6 : 47) thumb-sized[2] and like a smokeless flame! (PU. 3 : 9)

2. By Him is all Space pervaded, while He is pervaded by nothing at all; unbroken and simple[3] without and within, He abides. (AG. 2 : 14) Pure as Space, absolute[4] and boundless, moveless[5] and unchanging, void within and without, same and secondless, Himself the Supreme God, what (else) is there to be known?[6] (VC. 393) Having seen which, there is none else to be seen; having become which, there is nothing else to become; having known which, there is nought else to be known—thus may God be defined.[7] (AB. 55)

[1] When God is known, in the highest ecstasy, not even the knower as a separate existence is found; this is a matter of experience.

[2] As the Self is often said to dwell in the 'heart,' it was pictured as of this size Of course, it has really no size at all, being independent of both space and time, and pure light.

[3] *or*: uniform.

[4] *lit*: without alternation.

[5] *lit*: without vibration.

[6] *or*: perceived, realised.

[7] *or*: understood.

Yes, this 'all' is only God, the infinite and indefinable, all that we see of difference is because our sight is 'out of focus', wearied by the dazzling glories of His manifested universe, and unable to perceive clearly what alone is really there. When the defect of our spiritual sight is cured, when we can see what *is*, and not what our minds mis-create within the whirling vortex of their misleading thoughts, then we know for ourselves that "everything which meets the eye, all things hidden in the deepest heart" is only God Himself. Inside, outside, on every side is the self alone, one, eternal, limitless, and all-pervading.

Changeless and simple, onefold, absolutely *pure*, because no other can exist to defile that total Perfection; no evil *is*, what else is there to know or to be known save He? Knower, known, knowledge itself, all alike are that One Being beyond all being—Source, Goal, Perfection Absolute.

3. True Worship

1. (Now) how can I worship that Formless One, undifferentiated, benign and changeless, by whom all this (universe) is filled—the Self (filled) by the Self in the Self?[1] (AG. 1 : 2)

2. A heart free from such passions as desire, speech untainted by falsehood, activity without [illegible] is worship of the Lord.[2] (DU. 2 : 8) Purifying worship lies in

[1] *yenedam pūritam sarvamātmanaivātmanātmani.*

[2] *Cf.* the great passage in Isaiah 1 : 17.

all acts tending to the burning of the body; that purifies whereby the (mere) knowledge of a deity is given up and the Self is grasped.[1] (YV. 30 : 74)

3. The whole Waking State is the outcome of thought alone,[2] the entire play[3] of the world depends only on thought. Let this mere thought go, turning to the Thought-free,[4] and in the heart realise My state. Pass your time thinking of Me, talking with Me,[5] explaining Me to one another, having become solely absorbed in Me. (VU. 2 : 45-46)

4. Beyond the gloom of ignorance and without any false lights,[6] one may realise the stainless pure Bliss beyond mind and voice in this way: "I am God, the bliss of intense Awareness!" (AU. 2 : 47-48) Now for that (worship) the very best flowers are indeed Wisdom, Impartiality and Calmness;[7] wise

[1] *tyājya devāvabodhātmagrahyam.*

[2] *or*: is only known by thought (*sankalpa*), or purposive thinking, motive.

[3] *or*: beauty.

[4] *nirvikalpa*, a name for that state of ecstasy which passes beyond all merely conscious experience.

[5] *or*: glorifying Me with songs.

[6] *or*: appearances, fallacies (*ābhās*).

[7] This recalls Guru Nanak's way of talking (*cf.* GGS 30, 68).

men (hold that) a kindly and pure heart is the only worship to be done, and (that) the God which may be called the Self (is to be adored) with the flowers of Quiet and Wisdom. (YV. 30 : 57-58)

5. On Him make steady your gaze. (APU. 2 : 19) (But) so long as you cannot clearly realise this (formless) aspect of the Self, so long be busy in worshipping the four-armed Form[1] of God; then, in due course enlightened, you will (later) come to realise that Supreme. (YV. 33 : 40-41) (Remember that) Siva is a form of Vishnu and Vishnu a form of Siva; Vishnu is Siva's heart and Siva the heart of Vishnu; as Vishnu is full of Siva, (so too) is Siva full of Vishnu.[2] (Sk. U. 8)

How can such an All-Pervading be worshipped with incense, with fire or lights, with sacrificial offering or verbal prayer? As Hermes declared (GH 24) and Guru Nanak sang (GGS 18), all that can be thought of is Himself; the Offerer is that Self, the Victim is that Self, the Recipient is that Self as well.

For the enlightened one only the purity of the 'individual self', to match the infinite Purity of the 'Universal Self', can be real 'worship'. The ennobling

[1] *i.e. Caturbhuja*, a name of Krishna, the personal Deity.

[2] The Maintainer and the Destroyer are *one*; how can men quarrel over imagined differences between 'them'?

of that 'little self' in thought and deed and word, the 'mortification' of the gross, the purely physical, a steady devotion to the Supreme One Self behind all phenomena —such alone is real worship for one who knows.

Turning from perception of the mind's outward play, this thought-born universe, the self that seeks in the heart the thought-free state of Him whence all derives, the self that *loves* that One Eternal, becomes eternal, infinite and truly wise. Putting aside the ignorant assumption of separate selfhood and the countless deceptions of thought, one can realise that Eternal as everywhere within and without, the self as one with the Self. Adoring that One with all the heart's spontaneous virtues, one knows and loves Him beyond whom is nothing that can be known or loved.

But until the self can turn from thought to the great silence of thought-free contemplation, it is well to worship the many holy forms of beauty conceived by all the religions. The mind is purified of grosser concepts by meditation on and service of these 'personal' deities so long beloved by the masses of mankind. It matters not at all which form be chosen for this preliminary adoration; all alike are mind born thoughts, none of them portray the Formless as He is, and any one may serve to still and purify the mind till it can bear to go beyond all forms into the silence of that ineffable 'Darkness' where God really dwells. Nothing man can think of is so stupid as religious fanaticism in favour of one form above another; while all alike are relatively true, while all alike are factually false, men yet fight for those phantoms and drown themselves in blinding hate for those 'other selves' whose minds are drawn by heredity, education, environment, to prefer some form other than they themselves have chosen. And so man multiplies his miseries out of the very means given for his liberation!

4. Adoration of the Lord

1. And now hail to the Self, the pure Reason inseparate from me, (for) I am one who has at last[1] attained to the God (dwelling) in all the worlds! (YV. 22 : 76) (O God), Thou art the Universal Being, the ancient Lord of Beings, the one Ruler and overshadowing the world. . . . With one step all was covered by Thee,[2] . . . the Terrible One[3] dwelling in the cave (of the heart) of all creatures, . . . (the Mystery of) night and day, of acts and times past, future, present; . . . Thou art the warp and woof sought out by actions![4] (EU. 1, 3, 5-6, 9)

2. I praise that Hari, destroyer of the gloom of worldliness,[5] into whom the devotees of the Deathless One merge on giving up the body, having step by step removed all that is seen, having recognised and realised what

[1] *lit*: after a very long time.

[2] An allusion to the story of Bali, the Emperor-devotee tricked by the Avatar Vāmana, found in the *Bhāgavatam* and other *Purāṇas*.

[3] Rudra, a form of deity identified with Siva.

[4] *i.e.*, the ultimate aim of all activity.

[5] This refrain reads: *tam samsāradhvān tavinās'am Hari mīḍe*. The name *Hari* signifies the 'Saviour', who takes away all evil.

remains as the pure and radiant Self infinite as Space. (HS. 11)

3. I praise that Hari, destroyer of the gloom of worldliness, who is everywhere, embodied in all though not (Himself) the all, who knows all but whom none can know at all down here, (who), by being everywhere the Inner Ruler, holds different things together (HS. 12)

4. I praise that Hari, destroyer of the gloom of worldliness, who has thus created all, being in this way its own very self, and (who) has then spread out this whole universe within the entire Inconceivable, who is the One Supreme Self free from both real and unreal. (HS. 22)

5. I praise that Hari, destroyer of the gloom of worldliness, this uniform Awareness dwelling in many bodies, having known whom (men) down here very swiftly become Himself, and being merged in whom they are no more reborn in this world. (HS. 29)

6. I praise that Hari, destroyer of the gloom of worldliness; until in the self that Knower has been seen as " I am He ", so long does all this (universe) seem to be real, but

on seeing Him in oneself all this becomes (clearly) unreal.[1] (HS. 40)

In this fine hymn attributed to Sankara the soul thus pours itself out in ecstatic worship of heart and mind towards that Infinite Eternal beyond all these mind-born deities, before whose blinding glory all lesser lights must fade, all darknesses must flee. He is the One Source and Goal of all, the [illegible] Omniscient in all, creating all and conscious in every created thing, knowing whom is to be merged in Him and to see nought else but He—all other things becoming translucent shadows lost in His light ineffable !

[1] Details of the meaning of this Hymn will become clear in the course of our study.

CHAPTER TWO

THE WORLD

To speak of 'beginnings' when nothing at all exists save the Eternal, Beginningless, is obviously a compromise, an adaptation to the thinking of the ignorant. Yet to build up a philosophy in rivalry to early thought, the Advaitins had to use the basis of an earlier cosmology reared on the Upanishads; this explained how the One Changeless yet expressed His infinity in change, how the countless beings of creation arose in His Being. Strictly, of course, all this lies outside the field of pure Advaita; it is not the absolute Truth, the *paramārtha*, but an empiric account for practical purposes, the *vyavahārika*, whereby in a logical way the ineffable experience of the One may be reconciled with the persistent appearance of the Many.

In fact, all this seeming universe is spun by the mind out of its own thought substance and, like a dream or waking phantasy, disappears when the Soul goes beyond the mind that built it up. Because it is all thought-born, mind-fashioned, there is really neither birth nor death, nor is there the evolution of the ever-perfect Self; God alone, Infinite Perfection, *is*.

5. The Beginning of Things

1. My friend, before this there was only the Real. That is ever spoken of (as) the

moveless true Wisdom-Bliss,[1] altogether full, eternal, quite alone, the secondless God. (PU. 1 : 2) Further, this was (all) one Darkness;[2] being later on stirred, that becomes unstable, and this indeed is the form(ation) of Activity.[3] Being (again) stirred, that Activity becomes unstable, and this truly is the form (taken by) Inertia.[4] Being disturbed, the Inertia varies from (the state of) Inertia, and this truly is the form(ation) of Rhythm;[5] that same Rhythm, on being disturbed, varies from that (state of) Rhythm. (MrU. 4 : 5)

2. Like water in a desert, silver in a pearl-oyster, a man in a post, and rays of light in a crystal, (so in God) there came to be the Root of Nature,[6] with red, white and black qualities, the (said) qualities (being) balanced and indescribable. What was reflected (in them) was the Witness-Consciousness.[7] Having undergone a further change, it became a veiling power owing

[1] *satya jñānānanda.*
[2] *or* : inertia, stagnation (*tamas*).
[3] *or* : mobility, instability (*rajas*).
[4] *or* : darkness (*tamas*).
[5] *or* : balance (*sattva*).
[6] *mūlaprakṛti.*
[7] *sākṣicaitanya.*

to excess of (the quality of) Rhythm, and (then it) was called the 'Unknown'; what was reflected (in that) was the Ruling-Consciousness.[1] Having Illusion under His own control,[2] He is the omniscient Creator, Maintainer, Absorber, etc.; He (next) became the World-Seedling.[3] (UP. 1 : 3-4)

3. Just as a spider spins and (then) withdraws (its web), just as from the soil herbs come into being, and just as from a living person (grow) the hairs of head and body—so[4] down here does the universe come into being from the Immortal. (MunU. 1 : 1 : 7) He manifests the whole world (already) latent in Himself; like the screen which is opened out under the influence of the deeds of living beings[5] and (then) is made to vanish again when the acts of living beings cease, (so) in Him alone the whole of the universe remains

[1] *īśvaracaitanya*, i.e., the personal Lord.

[2] Note here the refutation of the wild idea that the Infinite and Changeless could Himself be deceived by *māyā*, as absurdly held by some. Cf. Gītā, 4 : 5, 7 : 14.

[3] *jagadankurarūpo bhāvīt*.

[4] Note that the web is always in contact with the spider, the herbs live *in* the soil, the hair dies if removed from the body; so too the universe cannot exist apart from God, *in* whom it lives.

[5] Vasistha insists that *karma* has nothing to do with creation; it is entirely spontaneous, a 'play' of God.

rolled up like a screen. (PU. 1 : 4) Without painter or colour the picture is produced in the sky, as in unsleeping reverie one mentally sees his own (past) experience (when) peering into the calm, clear and flawless memory.[1] (YV. 14 : 1-2)

4. That was GOD.[2] (SBU. 1 : 2) From GOD (came) the 'Unknown'; from the 'Unknown', Reason; from Reason (came) Egoism; from Egoism, the Five Senses; from the Five Senses (came) the Five Elements.[3] (TBU. 3) From Individuality[4] (came) Space; from Space, Air; from Air, Fire; from Fire, Water; and from Water (came forth) Earth (SBU. 1 : 2)—the entire World. (TBU. 3)

5. This is the truth: As sparks of similar form fly out by thousands from a blazing fire, so from the Immortal are produced beings of different (form) and (they) also return to Him.[5]

[1] Looking back in memory, one recalls the persons and scenes found there as though they were really present; yet his vision has no actual existence in the present, it is now a mere fantasy though based on a real *past*.

[2] *tatbrahmāsīt.*

[3] *avyakta, mahat, ahankāra, pancatanmātra, pancamahābhūtāni*—is the series.

[4] *bhūtādi.*

[5] Cf. the identical figure in GGS 10 : 1. The whole of these chapters runs parallel also with much in that book and in GN.

(MunU. 2 : 1 : 2) Each (soul), then, is a fragment which is only Consciousness, the Field-Knower of every person, the Archetype whose clear characteristics are Desireful Thought, Energy, and Self-Respect.[1] (MrU. 4 : 5) And (this) Field-Knower is to be known as the Individual Soul.[2] (SrU. 15)

Before the Shadow there was only Light, a light so perfect, so vast, that it must to us seem very Darkness. Stirred to a new cycle of activity, that Infinite Dark slowly manifests Itself in the three great Qualities of Creation—Movement, Stillness, Rhythm, the first of many trinities yet to be. These 'Three' manifest in the Changeless One, who yet remains unchanged, for all manifestation is to some degree unreal, just as the reflection of an object in the mirror has no real or or independent existence. The 'Three' become Nature, and by their interplay set in motion the inconceivably vast drama of the newborn universe, all of which is only a shadow, a reflection, of the Changeless Awareness still motionless behind. Nature has manifested now, not as a separate being but solely as a reflection, an image of the Lord, who silently watches all the play behind the screen its whirling vortex has formed in dawning matter. It is He who thus wills the universal drama, who controls its every act, who reveals Himself in the universe itself.

All this is woven out of His very being, just as materialised phantoms in the séance-room are woven out of matter drawn from the medium's body. All has come

[1] *sankalpādhyavasāyābhimāna.*

[2] *jīvātmā kṣetrajña iti vijñāyate.* The Gita has the same doctrine.

from Him ; as He is everywhere, it is still in Him too. It is like the cinema screen whereon pictures thrown by the hidden light play their many parts, until the bell rings, the light goes out, the doors open, and the audience go home.

> " This life is but a shadow on a screen ;
> Its figures come and go, their voices fade,
> And soon the mental screen is empty made.
> The only Person acts behind the scene,
> His Will maintains and guides the whole machine ;
> This world is but a shadow on His screen."
>
> (2-9-1940)

Yes, that screen is the universe, the scene of all life's play in the physical and subtle worlds alike ; it is woven out of the 'cotton' spun from the eternal 'Seed' of all. It is like the picture drawn by an active imagination in the clouds, which vanishes when the wind blows the clouds apart ; so does this universe, born from thought, vanish before the wind of real knowledge sweeping through the still sky of a silent mind.

Out of that Silence, in the timeless spaceless infinity that is 'GOD', evolved in turn all the elements of our so-called 'universe'; these include the idea of separate selfhood in the 'sparks' of Divine Fire, and the powers implicit in that universal consciousness they all share, together with the 'elements' composing what men know as 'matter'—everything we seem to see and know through any sense.

And yet all are but sparkles from the One central Sun, reflected in a million million drops of water on the surface of the universal Sea; the seeming existence of these countless 'separate beings' everywhere does not show a real multiplicity in the One Indivisible Whole, which is Itself All-Consciousness and Bliss. For every

'spark' is itself the Fire; every drop is the water of that Ocean; every self is but the One Self ineffable and eternally aware at every point.

6. Mind Fabricates the World

1. How could He be doer or experiencer? Of what also, by what means, or when? So this (world) was never made at all, this world does not (in fact) exist; . . . because He has no feeling of making a world, the visible (creation) does not (really) exist.[1] (YV. 37 : 69, 75) This (universe) is spread out like a screen and becomes the slayer of the Natural State,[2] but really its shrinking and expansion are (both) futile;[3] the forming of the three worlds is due (only) to the deceptive power of Illusion, as it were waves in the ocean of the Supreme State. (YV. 17 : 72)

2. Whatever is seen, that is unessential;[3] (TU. 52) though this world is experienced

[1] *kartṛ bhāvājjagannāsti tena nāsti padārtha dṛk.* The Changeless One cannot suddenly start creating, so we cannot think of a real creation at all. This problem has confused many religions: either God has *always* been creating and will never cease (GH), or He has *never* created at all (GA). Without in the least changing His Be-ness, the worlds spontaneously arise in Him, or they are eternally present in Him.

[2] The universe is mind, and mind "is the slayer of the Real".

[3] *asiddhi*, that which cannot succeed or attain anything—futile, if you prefer the word, but not quite 'unreal' (*asat*).

and for practical purposes[1] (must be) accepted, yet its form is as unreal as a dream (to be) dissolved the next moment. (YSU. 4 : 10) In the Supreme Lord, Cause and Support of all, created things arise, tarry, and then dissolve like bubbles in the water.[2] (AB. 8)

3. Save through delusion (visible) things cannot be connected with the Unrelated, Actionless and Formless (Self), as blueness etc. are with the sky.[3] (VC. 195) When the childish mind without realisation arises, it sees falsely,[4] but once it is enlightened it sees itself (to be) the supreme immaculate Form. (YV. 8 : 4)

We cannot too often repeat this vital truth, for it is the very heart of philosophy, known to all who know for themselves and do not lean on the empty phrases of logic-spinners and word-jugglers.

Since this whole universe is in fact nothing but the One, the Real and Eternal, there is no question of

[1] *vyavahāra*.

[2] This is also the teaching of Narada (GN 1-3).

[3] It is foolish to attribute qualities to the Self, which reconciles all opposites; we can say the sky is blue, we cannot say the Self is anything, for it is at the same time the opposite of whatever we have said.

[4] *mithyā*, a word often used to mean impermanent, and thus unsubstantial.

its being 'false', in the narrow sense so often imputed to that technical term. It is not other than the Creator Himself, so there is no 'creation' apart from Him who 'utters' it, there is no 'making' because He who makes is what He makes. He *is*, and in that eternal Be-ness there can be neither a beginning nor an end. Yet the perception of pictures on the screen misleads the inexperienced to fancy he sees the real events, forgetting the whole is but a drama conceived in the hidden Author's Mind and then reflected on a veil before his eyes as in a mirror. So long as he focuses upon the screen, he cannot see the Author or realise the purpose of the play; he is robbed of the clear vision which is his natural right—being himself really the Author-Self of all he sees. In the still Ocean of true Awareness, waves of emotion, of perception, of intellection rise and break the image of the Sun above into a million tiny reflections—and one who chases those reflections loses awareness of the Sun itself.

While the illumined one knows the reflections are not really the Sun, yet to play out his part in life's drama, to which his past desires and his skills have led him, he has to act as though they were. So long as life in the world endures, man must act as if it were the one reality and not a mere shadow of that Real, destined to vanish in the first light of the rising Sun. When that Sun sets again, where will be the sparkles on the waves of life's sea? Absorbed in the purple masses of the darkness whence they came!

So long as we rest under the delusive vision of the 'world', we cannot realise the true relationship of the 'visible' with the Real 'behind' it; all is seen falsely as though it were solid, substantial, while it is actually nothing but a dream conceived in the still and changeless deeps of the eternal Self.

7. Which is Unreal Like a Dream

1. All this is an enduring dream, composed of (qualities) like mind and egoism,[1] strange dream-persons appearing there as in the waking state; (YV. 6 : 207) under the influence of mind[2] it is called the world. (YV. 7 : 9) In fact, mind comes into being from the sublime Supreme Self, an unsteady form from the steady, like a wave in the ocean. Swiftly, spontaneously[3] and continually that imagines itself, and thereby this misleading universe arises and expands. (YV. 5 : 16-17) The whole world is mind alone, mind alone is the great foe, mind alone is worldliness,[4] mind alone the three worlds! (TU. 5 : 98)

2. Before a lamp there is a sort of light, in front of the sun as it were day, in the presence of a flower a kind of scent—so also in the presence of intellect the world (arises).[5]

[1] *dīrgha svapnamidam visvam cittahamtādī samyutam.* Some render the word *samyutam* with 'arising from'.

[2] *manas* : the classifying, arguing 'lower' mind.

[3] *or* : fancifully, unchecked.

[4] The word *samsāra* is generally in this 'Gospel' conventionally translated thus; it implies also the chain of wearisome births and deaths.

[5] Note the natural, spontaneous arising of the world in Vasistha's view.

(But in fact) this is only an appearance, in reality there is no world. (YV. 17 : 29) Earth and so on are in the mind and never outside; where the endless world-snare is set by that mind,[1] only a dream-fantasy is experienced. (YV. 23 : 78-79) All manifestation is as imaginary as space; (so you may) look on the world (as) a long-lasting dream that has occurred. (YV. 17 : 96)

3. In a dream empty of (real) objects, the mind alone by its own power creates the experiencer and the entire universe; so too in wakefulness also there is no difference—all this (visible world) is a projection of the same mind. At the time of deep sleep, when the mind subsides, there is nothing (of it) at all—everyone knows it.[2] Therefore the world of each person is only fancied by (his own) mind,

[1] *yatrānanta jagajjālam samsthitam tena cetasā.* V rather freely renders this: "Almost all persons walking in the path of this dreamlike imaginary world look on it as real and enjoy it." This is not translation.

[2] They often ask, "Where is the world when the mind is in deep sleep?" Playfully we may reply, "Where is the hunter when the ostrich has its head buried in the sand?" As Vasistha insists, there *is* a real world, imagined in the Cosmic Mind (of God Himself), whereof we see distorted images; that real world appears to us in what is common to all human [illegible]. The thief does not cease to exist because the householder is fast asleep and so cannot see his cunning entry!

it is not really there. (VC. 170-171) For the world full of desire and dislike, etc., seems to be real in its own time like a dream, (but) on waking up (it) is shown (to be) unreal. (AB. 6)

4. In fact it never in any way appears or vanishes, (for) in reality everything (but the Self) is seen (as) an illusion. (YV. 17 : 97) Just as, for example, blueness (is seen) in the sky, like water in a desert place, like a human being in a stake, (so) in the same way is the world seen in the mind. . . . As in high waves and billows nothing but water surges up, while copper takes the form of vessels, so does selfhood[1] (appear) in many universes. . . . Just as necessarily only clay is found in the pot which is handled,[2] (so) in the visible world it is God alone who blazes forth resplendent. (A. 61, 63, 67) Absolutely, mind established in the Self is the only cause of the three worlds; hence creation is the imagining of (each) person, without (there being any need for) earth and the like.[3] (YV. 5 : 56)

[1] *ātmatā*, a word not identical with *ahankāra*, egoism.

[2] *or* : examined.

[3] Thus our author unceremoniously dismisses the whole traditional scheme of creation outlined in §5 as a sort of myth. When creation is a mere mental concept, why do we need substantial elements like fire and water to build it? All is in the mind.

So long as a dream endures, the dreamer is sure of its substantial reality, it is as true as his waking life. The strange powers he there has of swift travel, of sudden changes in age and personality, the apparent passage of years in a moment of time, the confusion of place, so that a Ganges scene brings St. Paul's Cathedral into its background, and the dreamer is at the same time climbing the Alps—all seem quite natural to him then. Never for a moment does the dreamer find inconsistencies in his dream, until about to wake up, when the critical faculty begins to stir. So too, when man begins to wake up from the equally unreal 'waking state', when he glimpses the actual life behind the screen of this ceaseless cinema, then too his critical faculty (*viveka*) stirs to a new life; then what for so many ages he has taken for granted is realised as 'false' —from the viewpoint of the higher truth now coming to its own.

All states of consciousness are in the mind, fickle and changing as the wind-tossed wave in a mighty ocean; it is that mind, which feebly reflects the Supreme One Self in its power of being aware, which imagines for itself the whole of the visible 'universe'. Nor is one's world the same as the world of another; each mind imagines its world according to the tendencies of its own past experience, its heredity, education, environment of race and creed and culture. It is not the *real* world we each of us can see, but only the world we have fancied in our own minds. The world of Malenkov is not the world of Pope Pius XII; but a world founded on the dogmas of Marx, Lenin and Stalin as interpreted by himself, here clashes with the world builded on the dogmas of the Catholic Church, as formulated by theologians and political prelates of the past. To see the reconciling truth, the truth that leads to peace—both Pius and Malenkov must step out of these narrow limits of their own orthodoxies, set aside the prejudices of their own mentalities and egoistic self-complacency, and

perceive the One alone that is behind all forms seeming different.

Just as the sun gives out light, as an iceberg pours out cold air all around, as a devotee breathes out a devotional atmosphere—so does the mind continually create its own picture of the 'world', when in fact that 'world' is a total fiction. We see a flower, a cat, a mountain, a star—but really all four of these are nothing but God Himself; it is our own mind which, like a spectroscope, breaks up the white light of the Omnipresent into the varicoloured hues of these many images, because it cannot bear to gaze upon the glory of the Undivided One. We see a world which has no existence outside the mind that sees it; in no way is it more real than the fancies of a dream, and like a dream it is scattered the moment we wake from the delusion. That it lasts for ages, instead of for the few hours of a night's sleep or the few minutes of a daydream, does not make it real, for the lover of pure truth. "All this too will go," said the revolutionaries; and in the dawn we know how foolish were the dreams which in the hours of darkness once held our minds in sway.

Not alone the 'outside objects' which we think we see, but equally the personality that sees them, of which we are all so proud—is inherently 'false' and fleeting. That little self, for which we are so ready to sacrifice everything else, over whose immortality we are so deeply anxious, which we think will evolve to immense heights of spiritual perfection—the 'I' that sings and weeps, that works and enjoys the reward of service—is as 'unreal' as the things it perceives through the mind. Both the seer and the seen are like a dream, the dreaming is the act of seeing; all alike vanish before the first ray of the rising Sun of Truth.

That Sun alone is real, eternal; all the mind has fancied—the little self and its imagined world—is

wrongly seen and out of focus. An ant crawling on a window-pane seems a monster crossing the distant hill-side; but focus the eye properly upon the pane, and you will see the ant for what it is. Such is the world, and such the 'individual soul' that sees it; when it is in real focus it can be seen as nothing but God, the One Self, and then the idea of separateness is realised to be illusion. Everywhere in everything there is only that One; all separate things are but confused images of Him like those in a shattered mirror.

8. And Disappears with the Mind

1. Just as there is no difference at all between the individual soul and the mind, so is there no difference between the mind and creation, (YV. 7 : 10) for the mind alone in this way manifests all this (universe) in created things. (YV. 8 : 2) Mind is the (sole) cause of objects;[1] in its presence the three worlds (appear), and on its decay the world fades away. (YV. 2 : 50) (Now) because mind is (thus) maker of the worlds, mind is surely opposed to the (real) person.[2] (YV. 9 : 1) (So) let there be no enquiry as to whence it arose;[3] rather let the question be, " How can I destroy this (mind)? " In non-attachment to it and

[1] *cittam kāraṇamarthānām.*

[2] *mano hi jagatām kartṛ, mano hi puruṣaḥ paraḥ.*

[3] or: how it was born.

(in its) decline, you will (come to) know just this and that (about it)[1] as it is (gradually) destroyed. (YV. 17 : 42-43)

2. At the end of the age this visible world, inanimate and living, vanishes like a dream in deep sleep; then remains a certain Reality nameless and obscure, calm and inscrutable, immense, neither light nor darkness.[2] (YV. 5 : 11-12) As this (world) comes out of one's own mistaken thought,[3] (so) on the elimination of one's error the wretched and pointless worldliness fades away—this is certain. (YV. 3 : 45)

And this suggests the remedy for that illusion. Because the " mind is slayer of the Real ", the disciple must " slay the slayer ", and so reveal the Real that is eternal Life. When Mind, that vain separative egotistic fanciful creator of the 'world ', ceases to play its tricks, when thought dies down and the wind of imagination no longer ruffles the ocean surface with its waves, then the Sun shines round and clear for all to see. In the Silence speaks the voice of Truth which, because of its subtle softness, has so long been drowned by the clamours of

[1] *i.e.*, all you want to know, *e.g.*, how it came into being, why, what it is like, how it works, how it dies, etc.

[2] V expands this to : " There remains the incomparable Tattva-Jñāna existing by Itself alone, devoid of all fluctuations of thought, form, name, etc., and without the transcendent vast darkness of Ignorance or the light of mental knowledge." A typical transformation with interpolated exposition ! This passage appears again in § 18 : 2.

[3] *yathāayam svavikalpotthaḥ*.

our many thought-desires. So our concern is not to speculate on how these thoughts first came to disturb that Stillness and so conceal the Light, but to take steps that they may no longer hide the Truth from ourselves.

When the 'world' created by those thoughts and desires, which so continually arise in those restless undisciplined minds of ours, dies away, then what remains is the Reality, eternal, infinite, all-beautiful. Before the 'world' was, That alone existed—such is the teaching of every creed; and when the 'world' shall pass away, That alone will be, resplendent, blissful as at the first—as indeed it has ever been.

9. There is Neither Death nor Birth

1. Having for a moment illusorily experienced the swoon of death, forgetting the former life, the soul sees another state of being.[1] This is what he sees: "Down here I (have been) a bowl of anxieties,[2] (and) thus I am (now) established as a beauty, (my) hands and feet are respected, and (my) body is growing sleek. I am the father, the son of so-and-so, I have so many years (of age), these are my delightful friends, and mine is this

[1] V reads: "Through the illusion of Death, the body for a moment becomes entranced and the Soul parts from it. Becoming oblivious of all the thoughts of its former body, it is filled with the thoughts of this life only." This may all be true, but it is hardly what the Text says.

[2] *or*: I have supported cares.

lovely home!"[1] Where there is such a wrong idea of a world (at all), through the illusion of dying immediate (rebirth results). . . . The great illusion of dying is at once (followed by) the equal swoon (of rebirth); in that state one is not even for a moment free from the distresses of a world. (YV. 6 : 92-94, 196)

2. But in fact you are never born, nor are you (ever) dead; you abide serene in the Self (as) a form of pure Knowledge. Hence, (though) you see all this (universe) you yet see nothing at all; through the All-Self you shine for ever, self in the Self. (YV. 6 : 200-201)

Death and Birth, Reincarnation, eternal Hell, Evolution of the Soul, and all other pseudo-religious concepts become a laughable absurdity once we realise that God alone exists, perfect from and to all eternity. The idea of rebirth arises only when the little self, drunk on the wine of its own imaginations, dreams it is the body, limited to its narrow space and its period of historical time—so that it must come back again in another age, another land, to experience all kinds of circumstance, and thus evolve its innate nature into the desired future perfection. No! Never was the real Self born at all, nor will it ever die, or be reborn. It is neither of India, nor of England, nor America, nor any other land; it belongs not to this woeful century, nor to the Middle Ages, nor

[1] *i.e.* the soul regards the happiness of the next life (in the subtle worlds) as a compensation for the troubles of the past life (on earth).

even to Ancient Rome or Egypt. The Self is everywhere in every age, not bound within a body, nor tied to any special period of time.

The thought of family connections, of experiences in the closing 'life', of some particular body, of good or bad health, prosperity, friendship or suffering—produces the thought of 'rebirth', to remedy or increase that sorrow or delight. Thus the needless dream of births and deaths is indefinitely prolonged, because the soul has not yet realised that it was never born at all. The *body* is born and dies, and then another body may be born to gratify unsated desires, but the soul has nothing to do with these things. Never at any time need it identify itself with the ups and downs of various bodies in the 'world' its mind has imagined for itself. The soul is really nothing but the Self, serene, aloof from all experience, perfect, eternally one with the Eternal One.

10. There is Nought but God

1. That by which you know sound and taste, form and smell, is this same Self, the Supreme God fully manifested as the All—the very name of God expresses this.[1] There is no other down here at all. Can the crest of the sea-waves be other than water, such as dust for instance? So too there is down here only the Unknowable, there is nothing like Space.[2]

[1] The word *Brahman* literally means 'breathed forth abroad' or 'expanded'.

[2] *ākās'a*, a word with no exact English equivalent; it is often misleadingly rendered by 'ether'.

As heat is the very nature of fire, so is the universe of the nature of God. (YV. 17: 23-25) Time too is only mind;[1] (TU. 5 : 99) just as there is no (set) limit of Space, so is there no (fixed) length of Time; it is only a mere appearance, embodying one play of the mind, and very much like the reflection of a light. (YV. 6 : 90-91)

2. There is not the whole world, nor indeed is there anything like teacher and disciple;[2] (TU. 5 : 105) as everything is of the form of Being, (there is) only Being-Awareness-Bliss.[3] (TU. 6 : 30) There is nothing but God; if anything else appears (to be) other than God, (it is) as false as a mirage in the desert. (AB. 63) It is the Self that is always omnipresent, (YV. 11 : 7) for there is no other than the Self. (TU. 6 : 40) He whose inner feeling[4] is that all is God has Liberation indeed; the ignorant seeing of diversity is to be totally abandoned. (YV. 17 : 40)

[1] *mana eva hi kālam*. The word *kālam* means equally 'death'.

[2] U weakly translates this strong text: *nāsti nāsti jagatsarvam guru-siṣyādikam nahi*, as, "There is no universe, there is no Guru or disciple."

[3] *Saccidānanda*.

[4] *bhāvana*.

3. No death and no birth,[1] no bound, no learner,[2] no aspirant, and not even a freed one! (ABU. 10) There is no perceiving mind,[3] no ignorance, no thinking mind,[4] nor living soul. These and those are (all) alike only traces made in God. (YV. 29 : 3) All is the One God Supreme; (then) what is freedom and what is bondage? (YV. 27 : 96) There is no bondage, there is no release; the immaculate God alone exists, (YV. 41 : 25) and this is the real truth! (ABU. 10) Feel in the self that God who you really are!"[5] (VC. 254)

All the senses by which the mind perceives its fancied 'world' are but a part of the divine power of that One Reality manifested in the all. As the whole ocean, the clouds, the polar snows, the steam above the throbbing kettle are all water and nothing else—so too are all things that are, and all things that are not yet, nothing but God and God alone.

So there are no differences between high and low, wise and foolish, good and evil; *all* are only God, and there is nothing else but He. If we see any other thing we may know it false, non-existent like a mirage, for God is *all* that *is*. To know this for oneself is indeed to

[1] *lit*: restraint (*nirodhaḥ*) . . . upsurging (*utpattiḥ*).

[2] *sādhaka*, *i.e.*, one who practises spirituality.

[3] *cittam*: which receives sense-impressions.

[4] *manas*: which imagines, discusses, tries to understand.

[5] *yadbrahma tattvamasi bhāvayātmani*, the sentence including the famous *mahāvākyam* of the Upanishads, *Tattvamasi*.

to be free, free from fear, free from every sorrow and defect, free from the tireless nagging of that little self which robs its owner of the slightest peace!

Really, there is no evolution, no evil to overcome, no ignorance to remove, no liberation to attain. All that we can name, all that we can think, is but a 'stain', as it were, on the pure image of that perfect and stainless God, a speck of dust on the glasses through which we see the Sun, in our childish ignorance attributing the dust to the Sun itself! How can that One, outside whom nothing else exists, be bound with ropes of ignorance, be lost in the darkness of primeval crime, be imprisoned in the imagined cells of Time and Space, which even Modern Physics has dissolved? The soul has never really fallen at all, it has incurred no *karmic* debts at all, for it has no being apart from the All-Perfect God. This is the sublime Truth, this is the final secret which Nature has in store for her lover through the ages, this is the whole of real Religion. Be divine and realise the Inner God which alone you are!

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOUL

The sense of an 'I', inherent in any wakeful state of mind, assumed control when mind built up its 'world', wherein it could function as it would. Gradually that egoism and sense of possession caught the self in its toils, and for ages held it bound in the dark ignorance of egoic action and the enjoyment or endurance of results engendered thereby. This false 'I', identified with the petty exterior personality, hides the real 'I', the eternal and limitless SELF; it confuses itself with the visible body and its needs, and forgets to seek its real Being in the Silence within. It is enough to resolve on that inner search and to cling faithfully to that; as one wills, so one becomes. And he who wills Wisdom is the wise, while he who rolls in folly is the fool.

11. Origin of the Soul

1. That 'goddess',[1] for a while vibrating under the influence of the potencies of Space, Time and Action,[2] step by step changes into

[1] *sā devī*, *i.e.* Maya, the delusive creative power of God, here personified, as often elsewhere, as God's *s'akti* (power) or 'wife'.

[2] *des'a-kāla-kriyā*; all manifestation is within the field created by the three coordinates of place, time, and the activity of living beings.

every power (of Nature). Though (really) quite steady in the eternal[1] state of knowing her own nature, she vaguely imagines a form dimly perceived;[2] as soon as (that) form is imagined, countless desires follow (after it) because of its great beauty. Having made (this initial) error[3] upheld by Space, Time and Action, the mind-form is known as the 'Field-Knower'.[4] (YV. 17 : 48-51)

2. Gathering up common qualities,[5] it thinks much on the lines of "(That is) mine!"; now that unhappy mind which does not know the truth is called the (Individual) Soul. (YV. 28 : 18) It goes by the name of a Soul so long as the self has (any) hope of enjoying (through it) worldly things, (YV. 41 : 82) (being) ever restless while saying, "I depend on happiness and pain, etc."[6]

[1] *or*: endless (*ananta*); the idea includes 'timeless', 'spaceless'.

[2] So when the sleeper wakens, at first the world is dim to his eyes and only gradually its attractions resume their sway over his mind.

[3] *vikalpa*, a wrong imagining.

[4] Cf. § 5 : 5. The term is often used by the Gita also. The one who 'knows the field' is, of course, the mind seeing the 'field' of its own concepts.

[5] *or*: the qualities of Nature (*prākṛta guṇa*).

[6] *i.e.* through happiness I get pleasure, through pain I get wisdom.

(YV. 28 : 19) Next, stiffened by old tendencies,[1] that (self) goes straight on to egoism—and egoism is rightly called the 'stainful intellect'.[2] The intellect, picking up desire-thoughts, becomes the seat of reasoning, and so the mind, (made) dense with error, gradually turns into the senses. Now this is how the Soul is tied with the cord of desire-thought[3] and prejudice;[1] the self caught in sorrow's snare gradually becomes degraded.[4] (YV. 17 : 52-54)

Three forces act on the creative power and lead it to manifest in all the forms we know 'outside' ourselves. That manifestation is prompted by her creating an external beauty, with which she herself becomes enchanted (cf. GH 3 : 1); trapped in the beauty of this 'world' created by her own mind, she becomes the *jīva*, or individual soul.

Having for its sake lost the blissful union in full consciousness with the 'all', she then tries to console herself with the worthless tinsel of this 'world', claiming it for her own; this illusive possessing of something apparently outside herself changes her consciousness into the fickle and deceptive mind or 'soul'.

[1] *vāsanāḥ*: the bias or impression left behind on the soul by some act or thought. As a deep scratch on a gramophone record tends to lead the needle off the proper groove and so repeat itself, so every experience tends to self-repetition, making it far harder to break oneself of a habit once formed.

[2] *buddhi*: not intuition, but the faculty of understanding things and choosing between them.

[3] *sankalpa*: the word often means 'motive', sometimes 'opinion'.

[4] *duhkhajāla parītātmā kramadāyāti nīcatām.*

So long as she looks 'out' to this deceptive 'world' of her own creation for the happiness which is her very inner nature, she remains 'apart' from that eternal bliss, bound to frequent plunges into the sea of matter to seek what is, in fact, always in the silent depths of her own being.

Confirmed by habit, this 'outward seeking' becomes 'egoism'; she is now convinced that happiness lies outside the self and can be got be gaining visible things of sense—power, beauty, love, etc.—and at last that egoism hardens into a selfishness which leads to endless miseries. The mind, which began as a divine creative power, has now become desireful intellect enslaved to the senses; the 'soul' is a prisoner in the self-formed 'world of matter'!

12. The Real Self is Within

1. Those who know Him see with mighty intellect that the intelligent soul clouded by illusion is (still) a Ray reflected in the ocean home[1] of the Almighty. Thus is God reflected in that visible medium, just exactly as a mirror in the hand reflects a face while (itself) remaining as it ever was.[2] (SS. 51) Being swayed by various illusions of desire-thought and in error, that (soul) manifests in (its) turn

[1] the ocean of manifestation, wherein God is reflected by the 'image' of creative mind or soul.

[2] There may be an image in the mirror or not, but that has no effect upon the existence of both face and mirror.

as the world,[1] just as water (does) in waves and the like. (YV. 5 : 4)

2. All this (universe) is certainly God, the whole of this is the Self revealed! (So) give up this false idea[2] that you are one thing and this (world) another. (YV. 19 : 3) Really the wise vainly (try to) distinguish in this way the Self and the Not-Self;[3] (YSU. 4 : 22) God alone is the soul and all the world (alike), and only a firm abidance in (that) Indivisible is (real) Release. (VC. 478) By the fixed thought "I am not God" the mind is bound, (while) the mind is freed by the firm thought "All is God!" (YV. 13 : 56) Those who leave the (precious) touchstone in the heart to seek another God (outside) are looking for a mere trinket after giving up the (priceless) gem[4] in hand. (YV. 19 : 26)

3. The view of oneself by the in-turned intellect (as) the Unqualified and Actionless

[1] God's image is the Soul, the Soul's image is the world fashioned out of its own ideas.

[2] *bhrāntim*, something leading astray.

[3] It is first needed for developing *vairāgya*, but later hinders further progress; really *all* is good, and discrimination is of only passing value.

[4] *lit*: *kaustubham*, the precious and marvellous jewel adorning the bosom of the Lord.

One of the form of Conscious Bliss (is true); the feeling of (separate) individuality is an unwarranted delusion and untrue. On the loss of confusion,[1] (that delusion) ceases because of its very unreality. . . . That delusion) may be removed by (attaining) perfect Wisdom,[2] and in no other way; (now) Revelation teaches (us that) perfect Wisdom is to realise that God and the Self are one. . . . When the unreal is removed the real Self comes into view, and this may be absolutely proved (by experience). So there must be a thorough removal from the self of untrue (ideas) like "I am a good man".[3] (VC. 196, 202, 205).

4. In the cave of an intelligence harmonised in the Self, (in that) unmanifested Space, in that very spot shines out the light of the Glorious One like the sun aloft in the sky, illumining all this (universe) with its own light. . . . Never does it either move or change, it neither is born nor dies, it neither grows nor wanes, nor does it vary

[1] *moha apāye*; the word often means 'infatuation'.

[2] *samyagjñānena*.

[3] *sādhu*, a word often used for a saint or devotee.

eternally.[1] Even when the body is dissolved therein, it is not (itself) dissolved,[2] (being) itself like the (empty) space in a pitcher. (VC. 132-134)

The nature of a disease suggests its own remedy. To reverse this downward process is to climb the heights. Through that very thinking of the mind which led to its enslavement, the mind can once again earn its freedom. The clouds of its error can be dissipated and the clear Sun be seen behind, illumining the blue vault of Heaven. Ever changeless, God is to be clearly seen when the curved distorting mirror is exchanged for a straight plane one—seen as a true reflection. Then when the seeker turns from the mirror and looks straight into the sky, He may be seen in His own beauty. Then he knows for himself that the distorted 'image' in his mind, once a true reflection, is but a 'ray' of God's eternal light. The 'individual soul' which has brought him such agelong misery is in fact nothing but the One eternal Source of bliss!

So too, he realises now, is 'the world' created by that 'soul' or egoic mind; that too is nothing but the One God. And then its unity with himself, the insepa-rability of the mind and its perceived 'world', becomes a living certainty for him. Self and Not-Self are in fact the same; within and without, there is only the One 'NAME', the Illimitable manifest. To rest in that certainty is to be free from fear and doubt and pain and everything hitherto looked upon as evil. And that is the goal of 'evolution'—to know that "All indeed is

[1] *na jāyate no mriyate no vardhate, na kṣīyate no vikaroti nityaḥ.*

[2] When salt is dissolved in fresh water, it ceases to be fresh and becomes brackish; but when the body is reabsorbed into the All, the All remains as it always was, unchanged.

God and there is nought but He". To seek any other knowledge is to turn from truth to fancy, to despise perfection for ugliness, infinite value for the altogether worthless.

This knowledge alone is true, while the notion of a separate self is a snare of falsity, which must inevitably collapse when the self can see clearly once again. This recovery comes when real Wisdom is achieved, and the Scriptures affirm that Wisdom to be the self-realisation that God and the little self are really one. When the cloud vanishes, the bright sunlight appears; there is nothing to be done but to drive away that cloud of egoism and falsity.

Then in the mystical cavern of the heart, where It has always been, unseen so long as the mind looked outward, the ineffable glory of Advaita-realisation shines out, illuminating all life and changing the self into the manifested God Himself, immortal, changeless, infinite.

13. Egoism

1. "I am this whole universe, the imperishable Supreme Self am I, and there is no other to be thought about"—this indeed is the highest Egoism. Such belongs only to the Free, and it does not lead to bondage. (YV. 16 : 19-20)

2. "I surpass all this, being (subtler than) the hundredth (part of) the point of a hair"[1] —that insight which (realises) this is the

[1] *or*: than the tail-end of paddy.

second good (type of) Egoism. Such tends to the release of the Free, and not to bondage. (YV. 16 : 20-21)

3. Such a notion as "Hands and feet, etc., I am only this"—that is the third (type of) Egoism, and it is really worldly and vile.[1] . . . The sooner you give up this through the two kinds named above, the more can the Supreme Person dwell (in you).[2] (YV. 16 : 22, 26)

The sense of *self* is not evil, nor is it false. It is only when it is wrongly ascribed to a separate independent soul, which does not in fact exist, that it becomes the enemy of self-realisation, the cause of every misery.

This 'egoism' is of three kinds: one harmful, one quite proper in an intermediate stage, and one essentially true. Identifying the 'I' with the all, that is, with God, realising there is no other, is the perfect truth and confers full freedom on the soul—where are death and misery for one with cosmic consciousness? Identifying it with the spiritual element in that apparent 'individual soul', what Theosophists call the 'Monad' or the 'Higher Self', is right and proper during the stage of effort; in time it leads to the same knowledge that the 'Monad' is indeed the One (as indeed the very word signifies), and so tends to the same spiritual freedom. It is only the egoism which identifies the 'I' with the little grasping and imaginative mind, with the desires and opinions and fancies of its brain and body—only *that* confines the real Self to the lower worlds of frequent reincarnation, of frailty, and limitation.

[1] V renders: "dire in its results".

[2] *yathā yathā pumāstiṣṭhetparameti tathā tathā.*

14. Hides the Blissful Self

1. All souls spontaneously[1] arise from the Supreme Abode; afterwards their own acts are the cause of (their) happiness and sorrow. (YV. 42 : 10) As a cloud-layer produced by the sunlight hides the sun and is (itself) seen (instead), so Egoism sprung up from the Self hides the truth of the Self and is itself seen. . . . By the effect of sense-objects is one happy or miserable;[2] happiness and misery are the concern of **Egoism**[3] and not of the ever-blissful Self. (VC. 142, 105)

2. Misfortune (comes) because of Egoism, through Egoism (come) grave anxieties, on account of Egoism desire (arises—there is) no greater foe than Egoism. "This is pleasant, this not," so (saying) becomes the seed of your sorrow; when the fire of equanimity[4] has burned (up that preference), where is the scope for sorrow? (APU. 5 : 70) Without

[1] *or*: uncaused (*akāraṇam*); so creation is called a 'play' (*līlā*), for no philosophy can give adequate reason for the 'fall of man' or the 'separation' of the individual soul. It does not exist.

[2] Happy in a favourable environment and sad when circumstances are hostile to the interests of the personality.

[3] *taddharmaḥ* : *lit* : the concern of that.

[4] *i.e.*, regarding all things, pleasant or painful, as equally welcome.

Egoism, how could there be a pain like that in the body? (YSU. 1 : 37) So long as the stormcloud of Egoism keeps gathering, so long will the *kutaja*-buds of thirst for pleasure appear. (YV. 2 : 38)

3. When the mind is pampered,[1] Self-knowledge vanishes afar; can the (full moon's) beauty be seen when as it were a great cloud forms between (us)? (YV. 24 : 16) When covered by the five bodies[2] like the Physical, the Self does not shine (out), just like a tank of water (covered) in the same way by a mass of scum. When that scum is all removed, the clear water appears, taking away at once the agony of thirst and giving man the utmost contentment. So too, on removing the five bodies, this pure and eternally blissful One Essence, the highest self-shining Form, appears within. (VC. 149-151)

The third, blinding, type of Egoism keeps the soul from seeing its real nature as the One All-Self whence it 'emerged'. And that Egoism is in great degree due to, intensified by, the acts willed and performed during many lives in a physical body. Necessary to such acts,

[1] *lit*: grows fat.

[2] The five bodies are the vehicles of food (*annamaya*), life-breath (*prāṇamaya*), intellect (*manomaya*), intuition (*vijñāna-maya*) and Bliss (*ānanda-maya*). What remains when all these personal sheaths are (mentally) stripped away is the Self Immortal.

this Egoism prevents the self from perceiving their real meaning and drowns it in a constant alternation of joy and pain.

All these interchanges of pleasure and suffering are due to this identification of the self with its outer vehicles of mind and body. For its sake alone are sense-objects desired; when obtained, there is a momentary satisfaction, when out of reach, a restless discontent. Westerners have usually thought this discrimination between what the soul likes and dislikes to be a proof of intelligence, but in fact it only shows the soul's foolishness: it is this discrimination between 'good' and 'bad' among the objects which causes sorrow. When the soul is equally happy whatever comes, taking everything, pleasant or painful, as natural results of its own past choices and as in all events of very brief endurance—then is true and eternal happiness in reach. Desire is the very nature of such an Egoism; the end of the one means freedom from the other, and so liberation from ignorance and misery.

The coddling of the mind's endless desires and opinions involves the loss of self-knowledge, for a personal equation always clouds the real verity; the truth can only be seen on setting aside all thoughts and longing. We all know how 'wishful thinking' and 'prejudice' prevent us from knowing facts as they are. Now those confusing elements are inherent in the very nature of the various bodies which mark off the soul as 'distinct from other souls'. When they are discarded, the refreshing truth of Oneness is at once attained and life's goal is won.

15. Mistaking Body for the Self

1. When his own most pure and brilliant Self is unseen,[1] a man through delusion thinks

[1] Such misunderstanding is impossible when the Self is visible.

thus, "I am the Not-Self, the body," (VC. 140) and that belief "I am the body" produces the bondage of the world. (YV. 41 : 34)

2. Just as a post (is taken) for a thief and a mirage for water, so is selfhood mistaken by a fool for the body . . . A (whirling) fire-brand seems to be a circle just like the sun; in that way the ignorant sees the body as the self . . . To a person going by boat all (else) seems to be moving;[1] in that way the ignorant sees the body as the self . . . When really the clouds are streaming by, the moon certainly seems to be flying past; in that way the ignorant sees the body as the self. (A. 73, 79, 76, 84) (One sees) water in a glassy surface, or glass in a surface of water;[2] in the same way the ignorant sees the body as the self. . . . Thus the wrong belief that the body is the self is only born of ignorance; only through the fullest knowledge of the self does that (error) merge in the Highest Self, and

[1] So too, when two trains alongside begin to move, a passenger in either cannot say which is in motion.

[2] An allusion to the trick played by the Pāṇḍavas on their cousin Duryodhana in order to make a mock of him. (See the *Mahābhārata*).

(then) the whole world, inanimate and living, is known to be the self.[1] (A. 82, 87-88)

3. "I am (out) there in the Not-Self", this belief of a man is his bondage due to lack of knowledge, the cause of (his) falling into the misery of birth and death. For this reason only, taking this body, this unreality,[2] to be the Real and the Self, he feeds, bathes and gratifies[3] it with sense-objects, (becoming) like a silkworm (captive) in (its own) cocoon.[4] . . . To be free from (this) bondage, a wise man has (first) to discriminate between the Self and the Not-Self;[5] by that alone can he become blissful on realising himself to be (really) the Eternal Bliss-Awareness.[6] (VC. 137, 152)

The grossest form of that confusion is one which many Westerners have so long looked on as the most

[1] This is the state of cosmic consciousness called (by Dr. Bucke) 'omnidentity', *i.e.*, being the same as the 'all'.

[2] *or*: transitory body.

[3] *or*: shows off, purifies and protects. Excessive care of the physical and other bodies is certainly a sign of spiritual ignorance, though one need not go to the extremes of neglect as did certain anchorites in early Christian Egypt and certain Yogis of India.

[4] How often a man's whole life is ruined by his attachment to such things as physical purity, or exaggerated anxiety about his own health! Germs!

[5] It is only later on he realises that as *all* is the Self there is really no Not-Self at all; then discrimination ceases for him.

[6] *i.e.*, *Saccidānanda*, the Triune God.

obvious truth—that man is both soul *and* body, or even the body which somewhere in its recesses has a soul hidden away, of very doubtful qualities and quite undemonstrable to enquirers. It is in fact this gross ignorance, identifying the self with that caricature of its real being which is seen, handled and heard by others, the personality which is all the 'outer world' can know of it (and how much does anyone really know of another ?), which is the inevitable cause of miserable bondage.

Such an idea is an optical illusion just like a hundred others we might quote. Because we focus our attention on the surface, on that personality, that 'mask' through which the real self tries to act on matter, we find that real self is out of focus, and so invisible to us. Long continuing in this error, we have come to take it for the truth, forgetting that the real 'man' is something quite different from what we see. We are like the dog that barks wildly at its own mirror-image, or the kitten vainly trying to catch the tame mouse behind a glass cage-door. When we know the truth, that 'man' is seen as the so-far hidden Reality 'within'; then we see everything aright, in proper focus, and know that everything is only He. Then we quite naturally cease to coddle the outer shell, the old overcoat; it is no more our self than is the pen with which we write, the bell wherewith we summon children for a meal—a mere instrument for us to use. So our first step must be the understanding of what is the self and what is not. We have seen already that it is not the last step ; we must go beyond it later.

16. The Power of Confidence

1. As is the practice, so (at last) is the mind, and it becomes fixed thus, (but) with

sufficient effort it may be led to yet another state.[1] . . . That very same form towards which the mind singly (turns) can be attained. (GYV. 3 : 40 : 13, 29) In the same way (as) one worships God, so indeed does one become, . . . that (very) form comes into being.[2] (MdU. 3 : 3) Merely through (his) single firm[3] devotion a man attached to the Real goes to the Real.[4] (VC. 358)

2. One who feels free is free indeed, while he who thinks himself bound is bound. What do they say down here (in the world)? (It is) really true (that) what the opinion is that will be the state.[5] (AVG. 1 : 11) However and wherever that creeper of Idea may be planted, it produces fruit in the same way;[6] thus such (fruit) alone is found there. (GYV. 3 : 96 : 10) Whatever is felt down here with strong emotion, that alone at once appears, and so it

[1] *yathā samvittathā cittam sā tathā avasthitim gatā* I *paramena prayatne niyate anyadas'ām punaḥ* II

[2] *tadrūpo bhavati.*

[3] *or* : one-pointed (*ekaniṣṭhayā*).

[4] *or* : becomes Real.

[5] *or* : As he visualises, so he attains.

[6] *i.e.*, Whatever opinion or desire we fix in our minds will work itself out to its own natural result, whether we later on desire that or not.

is immediately seen. (GYV. 6a : 82 : 26) So dismiss this obvious mere phantom which has been taken for your own self and, with a purified understanding, saying only " I am God ", realise (your) own self as Endless Wisdom. (VC. 250)

We are as we think. If we think ourselves weak, we can do nothing; if we feel ourselves competent to handle our life's problems we can boldly face them, sure of somehow achieving our end. If we think ourselves encaged, we thereby create the bars that will confine us; if we know no barrier can confine the omnipresent self, freedom is in our hand.

So we become whatever we think of. If we worship the moloch of imperialism and racial pride, we turn into brutal despots, murderers of little children, destroyers of fair countrysides; if we think of ourselves as God's sons, we naturally treat others as our brothers. Attached to a noble wife, a man becomes ennobled; clinging to the termagant, the faithless woman, he becomes cunning, harsh and rude. The lover of a God of Love becomes himself a manifestation of His goodness; the devotee of spirits lusting after alcohol and bloody sacrifice becomes the slayer and the violator of homes.

We can make of ourselves and our lives just what we choose. Destiny puts the yarn in our hands; we may weave it into a lovely garment, or tangle it into a wasteful confusion. Realising ourselves as the One, inseparate from the One everywhere, always revealing His power in our lives, we swiftly become a channel for His perfections, an uplifting force for the whole 'world' around us. And that is the only real 'service' we can ever do.

17. The Fool and the Wise

1. Why, (being) unbound, do you say "(I am) bound" and then are needlessly (so) deeply upset?[1] Of the endless Self-Knowledge what can be bound, how and with what? (YV. 12 : 2)

2. Like animals the stupid long stir up[2] hundreds of cares in the illusions of sacrifice, mortification, charity, pilgrimage and the worship of Gods. (YV. 28 : 133) Fools will constantly take to the practice of concentration or (self-)control,[3] . . . but where indeed is control for the ignoramus who makes rules (for himself)? That (control) is always quite natural[4] for the wise one who delights in himself. . . . Because he longs for calm, the fool gets no peace;[5] the wise is clear about the Truth and always of peaceful mind. (AVG. 18 : 33, 41, 39)

[1] *abaddho baddha ityuktvā kim mudhā pariśocasi* ?

[2] *lit* : pour out.

[3] Mere effort cannot attain to God; it is His grace falling like rain on the cultivated soil of virtue which fructifies past labours.

[4] The Natural State must come naturally; it cannot be induced by anything we may do or attempt.

[5] "I *will* be happy, I am *determined* to be kind;" saying this, has any one ever found happiness or kindness?

3. In the dreary forest of the world there has (long) been no rest for the mind of those (fools)[1]. . . . For how many births have not you done hard and painful work with body, mind and speech? Today at least stop that! . . . All (men) are unhappy on account of (their) toilsome labours; do you not know even this?[2] (AVG. 10 : 7-8 *and* 16 : 3) They (do) everything only for the body's sake, and nothing at all for the sake of the Self! (YV. 18 : 31) Wise men see nothing to be done, (ever) abiding in the Self as though asleep.[3] (AVG. 18 : 33)

4. The good man[4] is the one whose greed, delusion and anger are daily growing less, and who in his own conduct walks according to the Scriptures.[5] . . . Among the virtues of such men (are) contentment and love as (laid down in) Revelation.[6] Now those who try to realise the Truth are men, (while) others are (really) brutes. (YV. 16 : 13, 4) Whether

[1] *i.e.* those who live a worldly life.
[2] *or*: (as another reads it) "but none knows this".
[3] *dhīrāh kṛtyam na paś'yanti suptavatspade sthitāḥ.*
[4] *i.e.*, the true man (*sajjanaḥ*).
[5] *s'āstram*: *i.e.* spiritual books written by saints and sages.
[6] *s'rutam*; *i.e.* direct revelation *heard* by the Sages.

walking or merely standing still, whether awake or only asleep, he whose mind is not intent upon (that) Enquiry is called the 'dead'. (APU. 5 : 1)

5. Attachment (to the world) is born from outer activity, while aversion (to it arises) from inactivity; like a child the wise man is altogether free from (these two) opposites and at rest.[1] (AVG. 16 : 8) The fool is deluded under the influence of his own ideas, the learned not so; virtuous folk enquire into (their) thoughts and are without the flurry (caused by) delusion. (By such) enquiry **they** come to know the truth and altogether give up the untrue. . . . He who has not fully known the meaning of 'I' glimpses the highest truth (only far off) in the sky, but he who has fully known the meaning of 'I' will become the garment of the highest Truth.[2] (YV. 12 : 1 *and* 16 . 14)

Knowing this, how foolish it were to repeat like a parrot, "I am a mere soul, bound, a miserable sinner, helpless and naturally inclined to evil, born in wickedness!" Such a notion must condemn us to a ceaseless swirling round of blind births into matter. Have we

[1] The Gita likewise teaches disinterested action as *the* way.

[2] *i.e.*, he will be wrapped around, very close to, the Truth.

not lived long enough in that darkness of ancient ignorance? Is it not yet time for us all to stop thinking of ourselves as reincarnating souls, slaves to fate and misery, unendingly tossed about on the waves of duty and of never-ceasing labour? This is the miserable lot of those who identify themselves with the personality and body which their fellows see (in part), and not with the immortal and infinite Self behind that mask.

All external aids to spirituality come from that initial blindness. Who is it who needs to be 'mortified', 'evolved', to undertake a pilgrimage or offer up daily prayers? The personality. Is that our real Self? So long as we think it is, so long must we weary ourselves with these outer observances; it is our own ignorance makes us labour like an ox straining behind the plough on sticky soil. Not that these practices in themselves are out of place or wrong; we need them at a certain stage. But if we feel it is *we* who perform them, that it is *we* who sacrifice our leisure for spiritual ends, that by going to Tirupati, Rameswaram or Badrinath *we* gain merit—that is our old egoism popping up again. A wise man performs such acts only when they spontaneously happen to him, when they are his 'play', his natural self-expression—not when they carry the slightest taint of self-consciousness. We all know how stage-fright, wobbling on a bicycle, singing out of tune result from the slightest consciousness of the self while doing them. The very seeking for the goal of freedom in such things, the whole idea of personal 'liberation', is itself the enemy we have to fight. The saint does all these things with perfect peacefulness, unconsciously, unaware that he is doing them, sure that in fact he is sacrificing nothing at all while he does them. And this is already the 'freedom' we seek.

What is 'goodness', saintship? The many virtues of the fleeting personality, the beauties of a perishable body? No, it is the gradual outgrowing of the primal

ignorance, the egoism which treacherously misleads us into the dark forest of the 'world'. He who daily grows more and more free from the opinions, the desires and habits of the petty personality, is truly 'good', truly 'human'; in him all the highest virtues of love and peace flower naturally as in a fertile soil. To turn the mind on any subject but this search for the final truth of Oneness, is indeed 'death' for the real Self—which lives only in silent contemplation of its own infinite bliss and beauty.

There is no effort, as such, for the truly 'good'. For conscious self-planned activity becomes a trap, a prison, wherein any incautious soul is caught and held. The Kingdom of God is for the child, for one who acts with total spontaneous joy and self-expression, not for the self-conscious virtue of the hypocrite. Swept on the full tide of virtuous ideas and plans, one may fancy himself a saint; later on, he wakes up to find himself spiritually naked and alone, the centre of amused compassion among those who know the truth. So to look within, to know the self, is the way of wisdom; when the mind comes to rest upon that path, it has no time, no interest for the countless distractions on either side; then the Real alone shines in its inmost shrine, all unreal reflections of its glory having been already dissipated by the dawn of Truth's infinite Light.

CHAPTER FOUR

BONDAGE AND FREEDOM

The one self functions in the three main states of Sleep, Dream and Waking, plunging deeper into error and confusion as his consciousness moves from the quiet within to the glare of outer things. For this is Ignorance, to identify the self with the personality and its bodies. It is thought which traps us in that snare, the persistent habit we have of saying 'I' when we mean these unreal things, a habit every mother teaches to her child—more ignorant than itself when it naturally says, "Baby wants that!" and she cries, "No, say 'I want that'." This ancient error is based on delusion, on desire and opinionativeness, which intensify the fancied separativeness of the self from 'others'. And it is the washing away of these causes of illusion, which cleans the mind and purifies the heart, so that it may "see God". Because the 'mind' is the seat of this false egoism, that 'mind' must be eradicated and all its old tendencies destroyed, by selfless unmotivated action, leading to a persevering stillness in the Inner immaterial Self. Those who try to tread this path find a joy unknown to others, for on it alone the All is found.

18. The Three States

1. Know it is Egoism which feels "This is the doer, the experiencer" and, by uniting

with the (three) qualities like Rhythm, enjoys the three states.[1] (VC. 104) In Waking, Dream and Sleep, only one Self is to be recognised, and for him who has gone beyond (these) three states there is no rebirth.[2] (ABU. 11) Asleep even when not in Sleep, dreaming[3] even when not in Dream, and awake even when not in Waking, the Sage is happy in every state.[4] (AVG. 18 : 94)

2. (So then) the three phases of Consciousness are called Waking, Dream and Sleep; down here the threefold (perceiving) mind is settled as peaceful, terrible, or inert.[5] (YV. 42 : 42) In Dream (itself) the marvellous dream-world is destroyed; is it ever seen as different from **the self**[6] on waking? (VC. 253)

[1] There is a certain correspondence between the three phases of consciousness and the three qualities of Nature noted in § 5 : 1.

[2] Because he is identified with the One beyond all modifications, the Self unmanifest before creation.

[3] *lit* : *s'ayitaḥ*, lying down.

[4] So the Gītā says the Sage is equally calm in all states, the day of men being night for him, etc.

[5] The parallels here seem to be : Waking, peaceful, *sattvaguṇa* ; Dream, terrible, *rajoguṇa* ; Sleep, inert, *tamoguṇa*. But this order may be adopted only for metrical reasons, for one might naturally associate Waking rather with *rajas* and outer activity. Atreya links it with the terrible and gross, and Dream with the peaceful and subtle. Text reads : *s'āntam ghoram ca mūḍham*.

[6] *lit* : from this one. It may refer to the self, the world, or the state.

(So too) whatever is seen of all this (waking) world, inanimate or living, is dissolved in Sleep at the end of the age[1] as though it were a (mere) dream;[2] (MU. 4 : 44) and who has ever seen a difference in altogether happy Sleep? (AAU. 25)

3. That which one meets in Sleep without (the presence of any) sense objects is the bliss of the Self; and this is attested by Revelation, Perception, Tradition and Inference.[3] . . . In Sleep the full power of the bliss-body rises up (into consciousness), and a little of it (also) in both Dream and Waking (states) when desired[4] (things) are seen, etc. (VC. 107, 208)

There is only one self, in whichever of these states of consciousness it may be acting. When a man sleeps, dreams or wakes, it is still the same man; he does not

[1] *i.e.* both of physical life and of the era of manifestation (*kalpānte*).

[2] Dream is transient, and on waking its persons and scenes are reabsorbed into the mind itself; so too when the body dies, all this physical 'world' is reabsorbed into the deeper layers of the mind whence it emerged, and only the One remains after the subtler worlds are likewise merged in turn. This passage is found also in § 8 : 2.

[3] 'Inference' is the reasonable deduction from what is already known for certain as true.

[4] *or*: liked. When we see, touch, hear pleasant things we have a flash of happiness; and all happiness is a reflection of the bliss eternally innate in the Self. It is the mind which wrongly associates that happiness with the outer things which made us aware of the bliss in the Self.

change in any way because the mind is sunk in sleep or intoxicated by lovely dreams. So too, whether he functions in the physical body and is what we call 'alive', whether he withdraws from common sight into the 'astral world' after death or in a swoon, whether he retreats yet further into the happy higher planes of 'Devachan'—he is still the same man as he was when signing cash ledgers in the city bank or catching fish in the Adyar River. One who knows this—not in theory, but by carrying full awareness through the three states without a break—becomes immortal, and for him there is no further need to assume the physical body of heavy matter. Then the distinctions between the states merge into one another; dream, sleeping and waking consciousnesses run concurrently, and the man can be active on all three planes at once. Such a man may well be styled a Sage or a Master.

We must always keep in mind, meanwhile, that while these changing states come and go, *we* remain; the 'experiencer' of all three continues unchanged by these external variations of mode. What we call 'death' affects even the petty personality hardly more than does falling asleep; he has no more reason to fear the 'end of life' than he dreads entering into a rather pleasant day-dream in a comfortable armchair over a cheery fire in winter. As sleep gives way to dream, and wakening brings that dream in turn to an end, so 'physical' gives way to 'astral', and that to 'mental' life on the inner planes we experience after 'death'.

We are assured that the 'unconsciousness' (of sense-objects) experienced in deep sleep is bliss, the veritable bliss of God Himself, and for this the usual four sources of proof are alleged: it has been declared by Scripture, it can be tested by each man for himself, previous witnesses for centuries have reported it as their experience, and it may also be assumed from the absence in that state of all causes for anxiety and sorrow.

19. Stages of Unwisdom[1]

1. This is how the sevenfold[2] delusion again becomes fully intermingled together in many forms: now hear an account of it. (YV. 13 : 98)

2. First, that awareness which is nameless and stainless, (which) is about to be Mind and is the basis of the meaning of such names as 'mind', 'individual soul', etc., (while still) remaining in seed form—that wakefulness is called the 'Seed of Waking'. (YV. 13 : 99-100)

3. This idea of a newborn blossom which (comes out) clearly from the former latency, (separating) this one from another (and saying) "I" (and) "This is mine"—such is 'Waking'. (YV. 13 : 101)

4. The above notion confirmed[3] after (many a) birth,[4] saying, "This one and that", "I and this (world)", "That is for me!"—thus is induced the (state of) 'Great Waking'. (YV. 13 : 102)

[1] Sri H. G. Narahari, M.O.L., Adyar Library, kindly gave me a little help in the rendering of this difficult section.

[2] The seven stages are: Bindujāgrat, Jāgrat, Mahājāgrat, Jāgratsvapna, Svapna, Svapnajāgrat and Susupti.

[3] *lit* : big, *i.e.*, positive, certain, concrete.

[4] *or* : after (its) birth.

5. That mental kingdom of the one awake which is of the nature of being always absorbed therein, (whether) vague or vivid, is called 'Waking Dream'.[1] Through various practices manifold dreams may be had by the awakened, such as two moons, silver in pearl-oyster, a mirage, and the like. (YV. 13 : 103-104)

6. "For a moment, or otherwise, this was seen by me"—where the one awake has such a memory,[2] it is thus styled 'Dream'. (YV. 13 : 105)

7. "A clear (image of a) body dimmed[3] because long out of sight now after a long time returns (to mind)", (when) as it were (such) a memory comes up,[4] appearing even in the one awake, (this) is 'Dream-Waking'. (YV. 13 : 106)

8. When it has left the six stages behind, that inert state of the individual soul which is

[1] Imagination, Phantasy, or Day-dreaming, is here treated.

[2] A dream can only be called so when it is over. If in a dream one knows it is only a dream, one immediately wakes up, so psychologists have found. We do not know yet how long a dream actually lasts: some may be almost momentary, while some clearly last for many minutes, or even hours.

[3] *i.e.*, not quite clear (*apraphulla*).

[4] Such a mental image may assume almost physical tangibility, but it is still hallucinatory and dreamlike.

laden with an impression of trouble (still) in store[1]—that state is called 'Sleep', (and) in those conditions the world is lost in total darkness. (In) each one of . . . the **seven** states . . . of great Ignorance . . . there are hundreds of various types[2] of experience. (YV. 13 : 107-109)

Our authors now describe the path of immersion into the blank ignorance of total unconsciousness.

There is first the undifferentiated latency of thought and word, out of which presently Mind will evolve. This corresponds to the first of the *Stanzas of Dzyān*, where the latent is *about* to enter into patency.

Then arises the capacity for discriminative thought which we call Mind, and which says, "This is a dog, that is my hat", or "I like this and hate that". This is the Waking State proper, when 'creation' is in progress.

It soon develops into a more positive mood, in which desire leads the new-formed egoism into aggressive action and self-defence—the state of passion and pride, a self-assertion drawing near to the madness of intoxication.

Then through this intoxication sight and hearing become confused, subject to illusion (cf. § 22 : 2). Over fancied insults anger flares up, motives are misread,

[1] Because this state will give place to the restless storms of dream or waking life again. Only the 'deep sleep' of mergence in the Real is eternal and so wholly free from fear or care.

[2] There is no end to the minor states caused by the blending of these seven : thus we have the *hypnagogic* state of clear sensitiveness between sleep and waking, the *hypnotic* state wherein superphysical senses act, and the person may speak and move without waking, etc. etc.

false charges hurled at the innocent—all in good faith, for the enraged one is at the moment carried away by the dreams of his own fancy. So he sees what his calm reason knows well to be false—if he gives it time to speak to him at all !

When the mind recalls an event in some past dreaming experience during a sleep, he relives that dream for a moment and is again in the Dream-State, though his body may seem to be awake.

When he so vividly recalls scenes of long past events that they again seem to be before his eyes, his memory running back in place and time to the events concerned—that is the same kind of hallucination which so often fills the mind just before falling asleep with pictures highly coloured and abnormally brilliant.

And so the deluded soul loses its hold upon the 'reality' of the physical 'world' altogether; it sinks without pleasure into the darkness of total oblivion known as 'Swoon' or 'Sleep'—to be carefully distinguished from the higher 'Sleep' elsewhere called the 'bliss of the Self'.

20. Thought is the Snare

1. In his view the world seems to the ignorant fool a reality; (YV. 6 : 204) (and) looking on the world as real causes worldliness, (while) looking (on it) as unreal removes the worldliness.[1] (AtU. 4-5) (Indeed) the very (sense of) having to act is

[1] *asatyatvena bhānam tu samsārasya nivartakam.*

worldliness.[1] (AVG. 18 : 57) (Though you are) actually the Supreme Self, because (you are) attached to ignorance you have the bondage of the Not-Self—and that itself is worldliness. (When) discernment between these two comes, the fire of understanding will burn up the cause of ignorance[2] with (its) root. . . . For there is no ignorance outside the mind, and mind is the very cause of the world-bondage of ignorance. When that (mind) is destroyed all is destroyed, and when that is manifested all manifests. . . . So mind is the cause of both the bondage and the liberation of this soul—the cause of bondage (when) stained with the active qualities,[3] and of liberation (when) pure from (both) activity and inertia. (VC. 47, 169, 174) The control of that (mind) is to be living in Freedom.[4] (MkU. 2 : 1 : 1)

2. Now the seer's preference for the seen is held (to be) inner bondage; the seer is bound by means of the seen, and he is freed

[1] One is caught up in the world and its ways and ideas so long as he has a feeling that he has something to do in the world.

[2] *i.e.*, mind, egoism, ideation—more or less the same things.

[3] *i.e.*, the *desire* to take part in worldly affairs, to reform others, to establish some ideal, to serve mankind or the nation.

[4] *tannirodhanam jīvanmuktiḥ*

by the ceasing of the seen. (MU. 4 : 47-48) (In company) with objects the mind tends to bondage; without objects it becomes inclined to freedom. (MBU. 5 : 1) The mind is the only source of both the bondage and the release of men; attached to objects it leads to bondage, (while) apart from objects it is described as leading to freedom. (ABU. 2) Therefore the very outgoing of the mind's light[1] (to things) is bondage, (while) the quenching of the mind leaves Release behind. (YV. 12 : 4)

3. (Now) there is never any kind of difference between Idea and Mind; wherever there is thinking about the known, there is the Mind. (YV. 5 : 63) The whole world is only the assuming of a net of Ideas, while the pleasure of the Mind is in assuming (that) net of Ideas.[2] (YV. 11 : 27) The growth of the Mind is (cause of) great trouble, the decay of the Mind (of) great happiness. (YV. 43 : 7)

[1] *i.e.*, extroversion, attraction to outward things.

[2] The mind delights in trapping itself in a confusion of such ideas and opinions, many of which are mutually incompatible; yet that does not in the least disturb the mind! It will say God is omnipresent, and in the next moment speak of Hell as the total absence of God! Logic is not native to man. The Skt. text here reads; *sankalpajāla kalanaiva jagatsamagra sankalpajāla kalanā tu manovilāsaḥ.*

4. Truly Ideation[1] is the cause of bondage, (so) give that up; but to be free from Ideation is release,[2] (so) practise that wisely. Where the taker is in contact with the takable, watch very carefully and continuously, and gently altogether avoid Idea (about it).[3] Do not think of yourself as something to be taken, nor be yourself the taker; having given up (relationship with) all things, be absorbed in what remains. (YV. 42 : 12-14)

5. Such things as the world, you, I, the All-Self are called the 'seen'; so long as this (process of classification) goes on, there can be no release.[4] (YV. 5 : 23) A man is bound by saying "(That is) mine!"; he is freed by not saying "Mine!". (MU. 4 : 72) When the 'I' is not, then is there release; when there is the 'I', then bondage. (AVG. 8 : 4)

[1] *sankalpitvam*

[2] At Rajahmundry in 1949 Krishnamurti stressed this teaching clearly. When one sees anything through a mist of 'idea' or 'opinion', one does not really see it at all, but only one's idea of it—which of course derives from egoism. The objects do not themselves bind anybody; it is bringing them into personal relation with the ego which leads to the bondage.

[3] When brought in touch with anything, look at it calmly and dispassionately, avoiding all associating of it with yourself. Then you will see it, and yourself be free of it too. In that freedom is real 'Release' from the mind; try it, and see!

[4] It is this very rationative process of the 'lower mind' which entangles the soul and holds it captive.

Compared with this blank darkness of a heavy sleep, even the false 'daylight' of 'Waking' life seems reality, for it is something to which the unenlightened can cling, something substantial to console him. Thus it grows ever more dear to him, and he seeks in it alone for all delight, believing that he can progress spiritually only when he has a physical body and is enmeshed in the snare of the objects of his senses. This is what we call 'worldliness', and it is surprising to find it even in some so-called scriptures. Anyone who believes he has to act 'down here', to perform duties in the lower 'world', to win spiritual freedom through efforts made in a physical body, is a worldly man, a 'fool'. When he knows he is not this petty personality drowning in the 'ocean of worldliness' at all, but the immortal, divine, self-effulgent Self, then the very root of that worldly ignorance perishes and he is left free from the ancient bondage.

For bondage exists only in the mind—that same discriminative mind which says, " I am this or that ", " My name is so-and-so, my work is thus ", or " I want this and do not want that ". Only such thoughts as these, which anchor the soul to worldly things, duties, ideas and desires, bring about that 'bondage'; it ends at once the moment such ideas and longings are killed out. The whole 'world' comes into being with that mind; and when the mind is 'killed out', the world, with all its imagined duties and wars and ideals, simply fades away like a shadow after sunset. Freedom is, then, simply the slaying of that lying mind.

As an earthbound ghost cannot escape the scenes of former delights and woes, so the attraction for sense-objects, for physical life especially, holds the soul in bondage to the 'world'. When the creative mind ends and the 'world' itself fades out, the soul stands free with infinity as his field. Everything depends on the mind's nature; if it clings to things seen as 'outside'

itself, it is bound to the 'world' and the chain of rebirths; if it turns with contempt from such childish baubles and seeks 'within' itself the Infinite Eternal, then it is on the way to total Freedom.

Not for a moment can we dissociate the mind from those thoughts which make it up. When the mind is 'thought-free', it is no longer mind at all, in that sense; it functions as the boundless Self. Immersed in desires for pleasure and repulsion from pain, the mind delights in endless thinking: "How to avoid that and attain to this?" Even when the thoughts are uncontrolled and purposeless, the mind goes on like a sleepy Tibetan's prayer-wheel, automatically revolving a million half-remembered memories, in what psychologists call 'autistic thinking', and what common folk dub 'day-dreaming'. This ceaseless activity of the mind leads the person into constant action, nearly all of which soon ends in the smoke and ashes of disappointment and disgust. When the mind is still, if only for a moment, then there is peace and sweet contentment—till it starts again its useless restlessness, like a kitten chasing its own tail, or a squirrel in a cage.

So thinking is the 'bondage', and the road to freedom lies through ending that incessant mental activity and on to the state of repose, of perfect poise, wherein the soul can hear the sweet 'Voice of the Silence', a very revelation of God's inmost heart. Even when in the 'world' amid its objects and temptations, the wise will gently withdraw themselves from ever seeking things of sense around them. Seeing even the cup of cold water craved by thirsty lips, the wise will simply observe the water, may perhaps go so far as to say, "That is a cup of cold water", but will not for a moment take the next step of saying, "I want that water now". Such a personal desire will at once break up the perfect poise of dispassionate witness-ship and confuse the clarity of pure vision with the quivering of

personality. In such a total withdrawal is at last found the endless peace of the Inmost Self, freed from the futile lures of the exterior 'Not-Self'.

So long as man is even aware of these outer things and awake to their attractiveness to him personally, so that his mind leaves its inward centre of poise to seek them, so long can there be no freedom for him. When he can say of everything seen 'outside', "That is not my concern, it interests only the monkey-mind", then he is free indeed. Bondage lies in the sense of the 'I' of opinion and of getting; when that 'I' subsides, when the mind becomes as still as a mountain tarn, reflecting in its dark waters without a quiver the tiniest distant star—then is its goal achieved, then has man indeed put on immortality and become divine. Nay, he *is* what he has really always been; only he may now be known for what he is, a Sage and an Adept.

21. Every Thought Binds

1. Thinking[1] is the greatest bondage, and the absence of that is release;[2] (YV. 43 : 108) When all expectations[3] are destroyed, the mind perishes; thus is liberation defined. "Let me have Release!"—if the mind ardently demands in this way, (bondage) arises (again);[4] (YV. 27 : 48-49) wise men (know) a

[1] *sankalpanam*, forming an opinion, etc.

[2] *tadabhāvo vimuktatā*.

[3] *or*: hopes, interest, *i.e.* looking to another for something.

[4] If I desire my own freedom, egoism is at the root of that desire and so bondage must remain. Egoism *is* the bondage.

mere hope[1] is the mine[2] of endless (future) pains. (MU. 5 : 85) The fearless one ever sees his whole self in himself alone, and then (he is both) liberated and unfreed; (for) liberation is only for the bound. (PBU. 2 : 31)

2. Bound by the influence of his own idea, **a man** is released (when he is) free from thought.[3] (YV. 3 : 48) Free from Idea,[4] to what limit of highest bliss can he not attain! (YV. 43 : 105)

Thinking, which is inevitably egoistic, centred on the individual thinker, is the cause of bondage; so the ceasing of such ego-centred thought must necessarily be the freeing of the real Self—which *really* is always free! It is the looking for results of what we do, our motive, the hope of getting what we want—which ties the mind to sense-objects and prevents the freedom which is our real nature. Even the very idea of Freedom, if linked with the personal self—"*I* want to be free, to be a Saint!"—becomes a new chain to bind the soul. "Desire God, and not *anything* that He can give", says *Practical Occultism*; not Heaven itself, nor the eternal bliss of 'Liberation', is to be the aim of act or thought—but solely the One Self. Not to be enjoyed by *us*, not the selfish 'bliss' of 'liberation' limited to the personal self, so petty, so unreal, but the simple

[1] *or*: undue interest.

[2] *or*: storehouse.

[3] *nihsankalpah.*

[4] *asankalpah.*

fulfilment of that perfect Will which is the Supreme God Himself. How can this subtlety be put in words? It must be sensed by the heart in silence.

A mere interest in worldly progress and welfare, a fondness for reading the daily papers, the love of music or poetry, passionate delight in science or humanitarian work, devotion to social uplift—all these tend to bind the soul to this 'world' of the essentially unreal, and so subject it to restlessness, anxiety and sorrow. Only he who knows the real self is equally in all, in the rich and wicked as in the poor and virtuous, in the Communistic enemy of religion as in the pious contemplative—only he can be wholly free from worry and from fear. And that is real 'liberation'—though we cannot use the word with strict accuracy, for the real self was never bound. How can God, the Infinite and Omnipresent, be limited, when there is nothing at all besides Himself?

In both what is realised within and what is learned from without, there is only that One Self. To know *That*, one must be free from the bias and prejudice of his own limited thinkings of the past. Approach an experience wearing the dark glasses of such a prejudice, and you can never see it as it is; you never really *meet* another when thinking of him as a sort of label—"This is an Indian"—and we know all Indians are other-worldly, unpractical, unreliable; "This is a nigger"—and we know niggers are passionate and ineducable; "This is an American"—and we know all Americans are wealthy materialists. One who thus looks at others never sees them at all, he sees only the distorted images of his own prejudices. When he can put away that bias for or against, meeting anyone solely as a fellow human being, then he has a chance to make a friend, and to form a true knowledge of the individual he meets. Then all life becomes a constant adventure of ever-changing delight because based on the strong rock of truth.

6

22. Erasing Old Impressions

1. Impressions[1] are of two kinds, namely pure and impure; the impure are the cause of birth, while the pure put an end to births. The wise (call) the former impressions which bring about rebirth impure as they are made up of intense egoism causing an extra dense ignorance.[2] The state which, when it has known what is to be known, has dropped the sprout of rebirth survives for the sake of the body like a roasted seed,[3] (and) is therefore called pure. (YV. 1 : 10-12)

2. When, without enquiring into cause and effect, something is given away[4] on a (sudden) strong impulse, that (leaves what) is called an 'Impression'.[5] What one has imagined with

[1] The word is *vāsanā*, and may also be rendered by 'habitual desire', bias, prejudice, trend, and the like. It is the groove made by some experience or thought upon the soft wax of the mind.

[2] *ajñāna sughanākāro ghanāhankāra s'ālinī.*

[3] The roasted seed can be eaten but can no longer produce a seedling; so purely physical habits like eating, sleeping, maintain the existent body but cannot cause another body to be taken later on.

[4] *or*: taken.

[5] When one regrets what one has lost or given away, the hankering for it is enough to lead to another rebirth in the 'world' where such things can be had again. So conscious 'renunciation' is futile, childish; real renunciation is possible when there is no longer attachment, and the object then falls away like an overripe fruit. The desire for it will never return.

deep emotion, one quickly becomes just that, (all) other memory being darkened. Then under the sway of the 'Impression' the man sees that form and is confused, (thinking) of what he sees, "This is a true thing." Yet on account of (his) 'impression' that (object) indeed loses its own real form; (his) defective vision sees everything distorted as if under the influence of strong drink.[1] (YV. 28 : 48-51)

3. An idea arising from ignorance of the Self is the cause of action, (YV. 42 : 11) (and it is) the acts of the mind (which remain) in the world, not the (mere) acts of the body.[2] (YV. 9 : 1) When 'impression' surges over the mind, the bondage of the world (becomes) extremely firm; (YV. 27 : 49) and as the 'impression' deepens (so does the sense of) duty, and through the increase of (the sense of) duty the 'impression' (grows deeper. Thus) in every way man's worldliness grows and

[1] "Absence makes the heart grow fonder", and the lost past seems to us a golden age. So what we have lost gains in value, our memory of it is distorted, and it obsesses our minds till nothing can be seen in due proportion. The line reads: *bhrāntam paśyati durdṛṣṭiḥ sarvam madavaśādiva.*

[2] Such a deluded soul plunges hotly into action in the world, forgetting that his mental desire has already acted there more potently than his limbs can act. This doctrine was hinted at by Jesus when he forbade even the thought of sin (GJ. 13).

does not (of itself) withdraw (from him).[1] (VC. 313).

4. With the ending of action will come the cessation of anxiety, and thereby the erasure of 'impression'.[2] The total elimination of 'impression' is Release, and that is called 'Life in Freedom'. (VC. 317)[3] (Once) bound by that 'impression', the mind without 'impression' is free. (So) through discernment (of truth) quickly assume the mood without 'impressions'; when it vanishes away on account of the Truth, 'impression' is perfectly extinguished, and when 'impression' is extinguished, the mind is still, like an oilless lamp.[4] (YV. 16 : 45-46)

Now we have all had past experiences, which have left their traces on our minds, have stained the pure surface of our thought with marks corresponding to the joy or misery they brought us in the past. So we all

[1] Man acts inspired by some 'ideal' and so comes more completely under its control. All 'ideals' are really only mental concepts, derived from the memory of experiences in, perhaps, a past life. They have no absolute value.

[2] The more we act, the more we desire, the more anxious we become lest the desire be unfulfilled, the action fruitless; thus the 'impression' is made ever more deep and enduring.

[3] This passage is found also in § 56 : 1.

[4] If we analyse thought completely, we find out how much is merely 'habit'; by rejecting that element we free the mind for spontaneous action, which is divinely free and leaves no 'impression' or karmic tie. The line runs : *vāsanā vilaye cetaḥ śāmyatyasneha dīpavat.*

have certain good or bad tendencies, certain grooves of action, habits, which have made it easy for us to do some things and hard to do others. We all know how hard it is to break ourselves of a habit, however stupid or harmful it may have proved to us; the natural inertia of mind and body lead constantly to repeat what they have done many times before. Thus 'prejudices' arise, a bias becomes fixed—so that some cannot vote Socialist because they have all their lives thought of Socialism as connected with bombs and anarchy. Even when they are convinced that the so-called Socialists now have a policy more in line with their own actual views and wishes, they automatically vote Tory every time!

Some of these tendencies hurt the soul that would be free, others help it on the way. The former are those derived from egoism and they inevitably tend to harden that egoism and so to bring about rebirth in the 'world' which the egoistic mind 'creates'. The latter type arise only when the soul begins to realise its true nature and is habitually turned to eradicating the egoism which leads to birth and death; these last only as long as the existing body and help it to go on until it has reaped the fruits of those past desires which created it; then they fall away and leave the soul as free as air.

Any gift which has a hidden motive, a desire for some return, underlying the seeming generosity, must inevitably lead to such an impure *vāsanā* or tendency, and it drags the soul back to the 'world' to get the desired reward. Every time the giver thinks of his gift, its image fills his mind again and darkens the memory of the soul's real aim, Liberation. Then he becomes infatuated with the thought of what he has given away, be it only a teaching or a human child, and can think only of the value of that sense-object or thought, gratifying his vanity. Then he soon exaggerates its real value in his own mind, sees it as far more important than it really is; becoming drunk with the egoistic sense of his

own generosity, he thinks himself to be somebody indeed and expects everyone else to honour him as he deserves!

One who knows God knows also that He is perfect in Himself, needs nothing, has no desire or passion, has given a perfect 'world' for us to live in. Why then should he act, or try to reform anything? It is ignorance of the truth that makes men rush in where angels fear to tread; thus they fumble through countless blunders towards an aim which at the time seems to them both good and pure, but which may in fact be quite against God's will. It is not that action in itself is ignorance; it is *self-conscious* activity, artificial, motivated, which arises from the infatuation of an egoist. What the mere body *does* matters little; its nature is to act, and act it will, for even its very inactivity at times may prove the most effective action possible, as the so-called 'Non-Intervention Policy' 1936-7 overthrew the Spanish Government and put Fascism in power over Spain. It is the *mind*, that terrific creative power, whose action is here spoken of as lasting in its effects. A sin in thought is *far* more potent and deadly than the same sin in almost spontaneous physical act. If the mind seeks results, either for its own self or for some cause it holds dear, such action is bound to hold the soul in chains. Perfect disinterestedness, perfect spontaneity like the innocent child's or that of the half-wit, is the only action which can never bind. So many of our most 'binding' actions are those prompted by a 'sense of duty'; we forget that 'duty' is really what we subconsciously want to do, being led thereto by our own prejudices and preferences. Such a 'duty' imprisons the soul in a cell from which it is hard indeed to escape.

When all motivated action comes to an end and the soul rests calm in the knowledge that God alone is all, performing only such acts as come unsought and of themselves, and doing them calmly and without interest

even in their probable results—then all anxiety perishes. The soul is freed from those old 'impressions' of the past and can act spontaneously as circumstances may require. That freedom is what we really seek. Not to sit idle on a cloud with harp in hand, not to close the eyes in the ineffable 'bliss' of egoistic laziness, but the ceaseless cooperation with the One Law in all it may require of us; that cooperation brings a bliss unknown to the ignoramus who thinks that by shutting his eyes he is made one with God.

23. Slaying the Mind

1. (The distinction between) 'This one', and 'That one', (between) 'I' and 'This (world)'—of such kind only is the Mind. (YV. 13 : 17) The mind forms this root of its tree of worldliness, having branches with thousands of twigs, fruits and blossoms. (Now) I hold that (this) is only 'Idea';[1] by stilling that 'Idea',[2] worldliness is uprooted and like (a tree) withers up at once. (MkU. 2 : 36-37)

2. If you rely on this (or) that visible thing, (then) you are that bound mind; if you give up this visible, (then) you are that free mindlessness. (YV. 20 : 16) Not by arrows, not by weapons, not by wind (or) fire can (the tree of

[1] *sankalpa*.

[2] *or* : by quieting thought.

mind) be felled, nor possibly by crores of acts[1] —(by nothing) save the great sword of discernment and knowledge, (whose) metal is (made) shining and beautiful by grace.[2] (VC. 147) When this mind has been cut off by the weapon[3] of Non-Thought, then all becomes the omnipresent and (ever-) still God.[4] (YV. 13 : 10)[5]

3. **Mind** is severed only by the sole blade of Non-Feeling;[6] as a broken cloud-mass in the autumn sky is blown away by the wind,[7] so is it blown away by inner method.[8] (YV. 13 : 17-18) (If) the mind be weakened[9] and the hostile senses stormed, impressions of pleasure will fade like a lotus-bed in the winter.[10] So long as the mind is not subdued by firmly practising the truth of the One, so

[1] *i.e.*, virtuous deeds or religious ceremonies.

[2] *or* : is polished and beautified by the Lord's grace.

[3] *or* : knife.

[4] *sarvam sarvagatam s'āntam brahma sampadyate tadā.*

[5] This passage is also found in MU. 4 : 91.

[6] *abhāvana*, *i.e.*, indifference, treating outer things as of no importance.

[7] V renders : "like thick clouds dispersed by stormy gales".

[8] *vātena kalpanenaivam tathāntardhūyate.*

[9] *or* : attenuated, decayed.

[10] *or* : snow.

long do impressions rage in the heart (like) ghosts at midnight. (YV. 15 : 22-23) Impressions may indeed perish from the sky of mind (even) during the night, (but) darkness vanishes at once on the shining out of the sun of Understanding. . . . And such a destruction of mind is at the same time the elimination of ignorance. (YV. 13 : 46, 38)

4. They say (that) practised together for a long time the erasing of impressions, knowledge (of the Truth), and mind-eradication do bear fruit. (MkU. 2 : 10) And it is an enquiry into oneself which takes the form of (asking) "Who am I ?" (that) is known as the bonfire burning up the seed of the mind-onion. (YV. 37 : 48)

5. If by means of strong inner control the mind does not appear (again), a man's doubt will be fully dispersed with absolute perfection: in that full intelligence unconnected (even) with traces of pleasant and painful experience a man who delights in the Self will (always) abide. Such a freedom is (for him) certain. (YV. 41 : 65-66) This is the sure sign of a mind which has known what is to be known, that it does not again identify itself

with all the worldly experiences of pleasure (and pain).[1] (YV. 3 : 56) So everything is accessible to the mind: the very same mind, (when) independent (of objects) and fully ripe in the state of eagerness,[2] becomes ready for dissolution. (MBU. 5 : 2)

6. When it has given up the knowable,[3] the mind ceases to exist; when the mind ceases to exist, only the One remains; (SU. 2 : 7 : 23) and this alone is the highest truth. (MBU. 5 : 6) (So) that merging in **Him** is to be practised to the utmost (degree)—for **He** alone **is** the cause of the mind's dissolution.[4] . . . On the merging of that (mind in Him), through the non-feeling of difference, the pure ONENESS is attained.[5] (MBU. 5 : 3, 6)

7. By realising that there is nothing (worthy) to be seen, the mind is swept clean of the visible, (and that) gives rise to the perfect repose of the mind's entire annihilation. (MU. 2 : 38) Giving up the mind

[1] *bhoga*; usually pleasure or enjoyment, but also used for reaping the karmic fruits of any kind of action.

[2] *unmanī*.

[3] *jñeya vastu parityāge*.

[4] The text here is in the first person.

[5] *tallayācchuddhādvaita siddhirbhedābhāvat*.

is the giving up of all (conscious) renunciation, (say) the wise.[1] When mind is given up, duality ceases to exist, and the Oneness[2] is everywhere. (YV. 37 : 34) In this (state) everything ceases to exist, and the universe takes the form of (empty) space ; like light it will become a pure form of light. " The three worlds, you and I "—in seeing (distinctions) like these, one draws near to unreality ;[3] only the seer pure in himself (can have) a feeling like (that of) the Aloneness.[4] Just as the whole of (solid) things like rocks is not obtained in the reflection, (so) in a mirror the Self alone is mirrored in His own Form.[5] (YV. 5 : 66-68) (Then) the mind becomes translucent like a clean lake in the autumn. (YV. Mus. 86)

It is the freeing of the mind from those old tendencies to ego-centred action that we call its 'destruction' (*mano-nās'am*), a word often grossly misrepresented

[1] V renders: "True renunciation lies in the abnegation of the mind".

[2] *aikyam*.

[3] *asattvamupāgate*.

[4] V renders this: "With the annihilation of this Idea, all conception of differences between the seer and the seen will vanish, and then the Reality of Brahman will begin to shine unintercepted".

[5] V renders: "Then consciousness alone will shine without the reflections of a glass" (*cf.* 1 Cor. 13 : 12).

by superficial thinkers. It is not really the destruction of anything, but its release from the bonds imposed by past habit. That 'mind' which is to be 'destroyed' is the lowest type of egoism, identifying the self with the personality and its outer body. This mind is nothing but egoistic thought. Never can it leave such thought even for a moment; as one idea passes off it gives room to another of the same type. When this endless process of egoistic thinking is stopped, the 'world'-clinging mind perishes, slain by the sword of quiet contemplation on the real Self.

This 'mind' is simply personal attachment to worldly things. It can be destroyed, and the real Mind, the Self, be set free by the realisation that the SELF is not the petty personality partly clothed in a body, but the Eternal Ineffable Oneness in all selves. And that is possible only when this 'lower mind' has been silenced by turning it wholly on Him.

Such a silence can be known only when there is no attachment to the outer things the mind desires, a non-concern made habitual at first by steady effort and the long purifying of desire; and at the beginning to get control of the restless mind requires great violence to the petty tastes and habits on which it feeds, a violence calling for much self-mortification at the start. Then gradually those old habits of thought, the tendencies to follow ancient grooves of egoistic opinion and desire, are broken down, worn away. A sudden flash of realisation coming from the Guru's grace may even destroy the 'enemy' in a moment, burning away the whole tangled undergrowth of ignorance, and leaving fertile soil for Truth to grow in.

But normally this needs much time and patience, even after true realisation has dawned on the soul. It comes as the answer to the questions: "What is this all for? Why am I here? and who is this 'I' anyway?" And it consumes the whole of that jungle growth like a

raging forest fire. For such questions, steadily pressed to the limit, shrivel up the ego before the heat of the risen sun of Understanding; and when that false ego falls, the real Self is found standing there alone.

That final 'falling' of the ego frees the soul from every doubt of the Truth ; how can he doubt the source of sunlight when he sees the Sun in its morning glory ? Aware that the light 'without' shines within himself, the soul knows the very centre of his being to be that Light; where then has darkness any place? Every shadow of that old-time gloom is gone. Never again can he be contaminated by a foolish wish for worldly things, never again think he is the body or the ego-mind. That mind has fled for ever; in its place is the Mind ripe and dissolving, soft with the wisdom of real knowledge.

And that knowledge is the Lord; the petty ego-mind dissolves only in the wisdom-love of mergence in the One Divine. When we realise no barrier separates the 'spark' from the 'Fire', the 'drop' from the boundless 'Ocean', that nothing can ever separate us from the love of God or make us different from Him—that false sense of separateness, which in our days of ignorance we called the 'mind', fades away, and GOD alone IS, as He really always WAS, in spite of the ignorance which made us think of ourselves as existing too.

Knowing there is nothing else but He, how can the mind be cluttered up any more with memories of those sense-objects it has now rejected? All drop away; the mind knows nothing but the One eternal Glory and is lost therein. To renounce things of sense while clinging to the mind which creates them and always wants their presence, is folly indeed, for the mind will simply build them up again. The *sādhu* who has given everything away save his one *langot* gradually accumulates property again, until he becomes a big landlord, as the

fable goes. But once the ego itself is given up, destroyed, there is no longer any possibility of those sense-objects resuming their sway and entangling the soul again. Everything disappears from attention save the ONE; God alone is known, and every trace of the false old sense of difference goes, leaving the practitioner merged in Him—a perfect Sage with mind divinely pure and reflecting nothing but the All-Present One.

24. Real Action

1. Action is for purifying the mind,[1] but not for knowing the Real;[2] the Reality is attained through Enquiry and not at all (even) by crores of acts. (VC. 11) Having given up (at) one (stroke) hankerings[3] after pleasure, (next) give up (all) trace[3] of difference, and having next abandoned (the idea of) being and non-being, be happy without mistaken notions.[4] (MU. 4 : 108) Or else, having given up all (sense of) doership and non-doership, all, drink up the mind and be steady, (for) you are who you are. (MU. 6 : 5) As an absent-minded person hears someone's talk, (so) the mind without even the subtlest

[1] *or*: work; *cittasya s'uddhaye karma.*

[2] *or*: the fact, the truth (*vastu*).

[3] *or*: fancy (*vāsanā*).

[4] *or*: without changing ideas (*nirvikalpaḥ*).

'impression' is not (really) the doer (when) active. (But when) impression is (still) strong in the mind, one does not cease to be the doer, (just as) one actually motionless (in bed) dreams that he is falling over a precipice. (YV. 25 : 13-14)[1]

2. He in whom there is egoism does not act (effectively even when) he acts. . . . Even while inactive, the foolish mind is always full of worthless agitation, while the unperturbed is ever at ease even in doing what should be done. . . . By the wise one without egoism nothing at all is (either left) undone (or) done. (AVG. 18 : 29, 58, 29) Intentness on (either) action or inactivity belongs to the Yogi[2] with a body-sense; (AVG. 13 : 4) as the undertaking of action (derives) from unwisdom, so also (does) abstention. (AVG. 12 : 6) Being certain that happiness and sorrow, birth and death come only from destiny,[3] seeing no (duty) to be carried out, (the wise remains) effortless

[1] A hard passage, quoted by Bh. Ramana in *Ulladu Narpadu*, 30.

[2] *lit* : one who has attained to, or is aiming at, union with God, but also used for those who have gained certain psychic powers.

[3] See the explanation of 'destiny' in § 38; it is simply '*karma*'.

and is not affected even when active. (AVG. 11 : 4)

3. An intelligence (made) pure and unperturbed by mere hearing about Reality does not even look at what should or should not be done by a renouncer.[1] When anything comes (for him) to do, then he will straightway do that, whether it be good or even bad—for his behaviour is like a child's. . . . Whether outward or inward turned, the wise has no trouble at all;[1] when something turns up to be done, he does that (and then) remains happy. (AVG. 18 : 48-49, 20) As a Seer's mind falls quite without attachment on things flying past at random, so too (does) the strong man (engage) in (his) duties.[2] (MU. 5 : 20)

And this principle tells us what true action must ever be, and what we can expect from it. No action in this 'false-seeming' world can have any actual value in itself; its only value lies in training the mind to dispassion and detachment, through often-repeated disappointments and disillusionments. No acts of charity, no ceremonies, no faithfully performed duties can earn the highest goal; they may win a right to the lower 'heaven' of reward, just as their opposites, 'evil'

[1] He does not mind whether he be turned to outward activities or absorbed in blissful contemplation.

[2] Krishnamurti in 1949 gave good examples of this: you see a train enter a station but are unconcerned because it is not *your* train; you see a hole in a carpet but do not worry because *you* have no responsibility for mending it.

deeds, may earn the 'hell' of punishment, *i.e.*, unpleasant consequences. But they cannot free a soul from the clutches of the egoic mind; they rather tend to strengthen that egoism through pride in its achievements, in the many noble deeds which have enriched its earth-life. All such egoism is the real 'enemy'; it is only by the total overthrow, the eradication of every trace, of such that true Freedom can be realised. Knowing that 'doer' and 'non-doer' are both illusions in the light of absolute reality, for God alone truly acts in all, the soul transcends that ego-mind, short-circuits its crafty pretences, and becomes unaware of, indifferent to, what may be said or thought of spontaneous actions taken under the press of circumstances. So long as one looks for praise or dreads blame, he can certainly never hope for peace of mind; he will be ever tossing from side to side, up in the skies of joy or plunged down to the depths of misery and despair.

One who acts for reward does not really *act* at all, he merely tries to buy that reward; if the return is not forthcoming he sulks in his tent like Achilles and refuses to take up the sword of effort any more. The ignorant may apparently abstain from action, withdrawing into high contemplation, but if the mind still hankers after *anything* besides the Self, it is only self-deceived and deceiving others by its pretended renunciation. The soul of such a one is ever tossing on the waves of desire and futility. The real Sage acts without desire and in perfect calmness and true renunciation, doing the work that comes to him unsought, getting the results of that work without satisfaction or discontent, ready at any moment to throw them off with calm indifference, or even to transfer them to his bitterest calumniator. Such a one is the real actor; selfless as the One who is sacrificed that this whole universe might manifest, he is the instrument of that Divine Sole Actor, who performs everywhere every action. To be aware of, eager about,

any course of action shows an immature mind and the survival in it of egoism and body-sense. This is as true of inaction as it is of positive action ; to 'refuse to fight' is as foolish, as immature, as to rush into a needless quarrel. He who in 1915 spoke of being 'too proud to fight' showed an egoistic pride which naturally could not endure the studied insults of the Kaiser's fleet ; so that too-superior nation soon became a combatant after all ! Every event of life, sought or unsought, comes to us as the expression of God's will, which is another way of saying Destiny, or the fruits of *karma*. The wise man takes them as they come, acts as the need seems to dictate, and promptly forgets what he has done —holding his mind, as always, solely on the One Reality.

One truly 'surrendered' never at any time need worry over what is to be done ; he simply does what suggests itself at the moment, and through the results of that action finds later on that it is the Lord who acted in him. He acts just like a child, looking neither to the past for precedent, nor to the future for probable effects, nor to the present for advice from others. Thus he is always happy, always content, for he has neither anxiety, regret, nor fear of public opinion to cripple him. He is no more attached to what he does, loses or gains, than a passenger in an express train is to the cows he sees grazing under trees in the countryside flying by.

25. Contentment

1. Whatever the circumstances, the Free rests in himself, withdrawn from what he has done and what he should not do ; impartial everywhere[1] through desirelessness, he does

[1] *i. e.*, equally happy in any conditions (*samaḥ sarvatra*).

not (even) remember what has or has not been done. (AVG. 18 : 98) Saints neither regret the past nor worry about the future, but they duly seize upon and carry out the present in their hands. (YV. 42 : 19) For the wise ones who know that all is God, what is to be thought or not thought, what is to be told or not at all told, what is to be done and what is not to be done? For the wise who see all kinds of visible things as the seer (himself), there is neither bondage nor freedom, no Godhead, nor even the state of an individual soul. (SN. 101-102)

2. The wise man does not hate the world, nor does he seek after the Self;[1] being altogether free from exultation and depression (alike), he is not dead, nor does he (even) live. (AVG. 18 : 83) Only by the practice of such a mindlessness can there be always contentment.[2] (MBU. 5 : 8)

And this is peace, this is perfect satisfaction and contentment, this is the secret of real happiness. Looking nowhere at all save to the ever-present Infinite One, the wise man—saint or sage—is solely concerned with what comes immediately in front of him. A house on

[1] *dhīro na dveṣṭi samsāramātmānam na didṛkṣati.*

[2] *evamamanaskābhyāsenaiva nityatṛptiḥ.*

fire suggests at once the getting of water or the saving of furniture; he does not get excited, wring his hands, weep, or impede others with futile and foolish sympathy, but like a true Boy Scout at once quietly organises a chain of water-bucket carriers, of rescuers, or of a party to strip the palmyra-roofing and stop the spreading of the fire. Seeing someone struggling in the water, without emotion he just jumps in, pulls the sufferer out, applies first aid, and slips away before the newspaperman comes up to note his name for public praise. And when he has been too late to render help, knowing it was not for him to give, he feels no regret, does not reproach himself or make excuses for his absence. For in a very real sense "there is nothing to do in the world", that is, there is no work which any one person must do, whether circumstances allow or not. Remember, it is as foolish to do what does not naturally come to *us* for doing, to do something not our own 'duty', as it is to abstain from doing what does and is.

To seek the omnipresent Self by trying to evade the duties of the 'world' is to plunge still deeper into the 'world's' attractions. The *sannyāsi* who leaves home because his wife gives food late or cold and he wants only to think of God in the wilderness, will often find himself thinking only of where his next meal is to come from; his latter state will be worse than the first! The One Self is everywhere, nothing else at all exists; It is as much in the household, the market, the stock exchange, the gaol and the brothel, as It can be in the holiest temple or the loneliest of woods and mountain caves. It can be found by the eradication of ego-mind, and not by transferring the body from one place or environment to another, which that egoic mind may fancy more conducive to spirituality. Egoism goes with mind and body; it takes a more dangerous form in solitudes and pilgrim centres than even in the local black-market shops.

CHAPTER FIVE

WHO CAN BE SAVED?

The fool is satisfied with worldly transiencies, the wise man gives his whole heart to seek out Truth, and to call others to share the joy that search brings into life. Those who are ready for it take up the invitation; devoting themselves entirely to the Reality, they seek a worthy Teacher among those who have already found and are willing to help others on the road. They peruse the pages of revelation, and dive ever deeper into the dim recesses of their own heart. So they find therein, hidden below layers on layers of old deposits of thought and action, the pure and radiant Primal Self, in finding whom is perfect peace.

26. Wisdom and Ignorance

1. The stages of Ignorance are sevenfold, (so) too the stages of Wisdom are also sevenfold. Within the stages there are also countless mutual relationships of these; at every stage these are bound (up) in the root, so the fruit (of all of them) is the personality. (Now)

dwelling in the Natural State [1] is Freedom, (while) falling away from that is the perception of selfhood : [2] that has already been described in brief. Now for signs of the Knower and the Non-Knower: Purified with full knowledge through (realising) the Natural State,[1] **the former** do not waver, while there is no union for those who have not known (God) and are (under) feelings of desire and dislike. (YV. 13 : 89-92)

2. What falls away from the Natural State [1] (is the mind) whose heart's love is the physical body ; [3] there neither has been nor will be any delusion [4] other than this. Now that state (of poise) which goes between one thought [5] in the mind and the next, the unreflecting mood, is called the Natural State ; [6] when all thoughts are stilled, that state is called the Natural State, (which) dwells (moveless) as a stone (and yet is) wholly free

[1] *lit* : own form (*svarūpa*), *i.e.*, what is really natural to us.

[2] This falling away or defection is called 'death' in §39 : 2.

[3] *lit* : marrow.

[4] *moha*, the stupid self-identifying with outer things, such as the body and its possessions.

[5] *or* : matter, subject (*artha*).

[6] *arthādarthāntaram citte yāti madhye tu yā sthitiḥ* |
nistamananākārā svarūpa sthitirucyate ||

from inert sleep. The changeless tranquil mentality, without egoism or (sense of) difference,[1] when it shines out clear—that is declared to be the Natural State. (YV. 13 : 93-96)

We have already studied the seven phases of Ignorance and learned how egoism plunges the soul into the blank darkness of 'sleep', that drunken sleep referred to by Hermes, the Gnostic and Manichean writers. We now learn that there are equally seven stages in the path to Wisdom, though these also very largely overlap and interblend, so that we may find a vast number of 'sub-stages'. The Wise are known by their serenity and steadiness, the Ignorant by restlessness and being enslaved to feelings, emotion and opinion. Poise in the One is the mark of real Wisdom; unsteadiness in the fluctuating Many shows immaturity and foolishness.

The chief cause of this 'unsteadiness' is concern for the welfare of the physical body and the preferences of the ego-mind attached to it; this is indeed the source of all delusion. The Reality, the *Svarūpa*, is that state of total stillness, of thought-free peace, when one idea has perished and no other has yet risen in its place. At every level, this stillness is what is called *samādhi*—an ecstatic state of balanced calm wherein is no sense of an 'I' but only a causeless joy, keenly aware yet outwardly 'asleep', so that the ignorant watcher thinks the Sage is woolgathering, day-dreaming, while he mystically incarnates the Universe's Only Lord. This condition of perfect bliss and peace is the 'natural state' to which the little self is really heir, for it is the very 'form' of the Only Self that is its real self.

[1] *i.e.*, between the self and God, between the self and 'other' selves, and between the 'others' themselves.

27. Invitation to the Path

1. All royal beauty is established in God, who is formed of mere Light ;[1] in order to still the restless mind, contemplate with effort the One God in this way, the infinite Light of Mind and the Universal Self. (YV. 14 : 3-4) Having given up the mood of inner tension, . . . you are who you are ; roam about playfully in the world! (YV. 18 : 2) (When you) have once given up everything, (you will) become the spotless great Silent One. (YV. 43 : 4)

2. Leave, O leave the world, and then altogether leave renunciation (too), the poison of (both) renouncing and non-renouncing ; by nature[2] (you are) certainly (already) pure and immortal.[3] (AG. 3 : 46) You are unborn and undying ; never have you a body. No birth and death are for you, (nor) mind, bondage and freedom, good and evil![4] Why do you

[1] *sthita brahmaṇi vis'va s'rīh pratibhā mātra rūpiṇī.*

[2] *or*: spontaneously (*sahajam*); it is very easy, tried in the right way!

[3] Conscious renunciation is cruel slavery, for it all the time strengthens egoism and pride. As we are eternally everything in ourselves, there is no need to renounce anything at all.

[4] When this is realised, where is the room for rebirth ?

weep, O child? Name and Form are for neither you nor me. . . If it be once admitted you are neither free nor bound, (then) how can you think of the Self (as) with or without a form?[1] . . . Everywhere and always you are without and within that Beneficent (God); why do you wander like a ghost here and there in confusion? . . . You are in fact the Supreme Truth; so why do you trouble yourself so much?[2] (AG. 1 : 13, 17, 51, 14, 16)

3. Therefore, with your own senses in control and (your) mind at peace, ceaselessly steady (your) intellect on the True; by realising the oneness of the True[3] bring to an end the beginningless darkness caused by ignorance. (VC. 336)

So blissful is that state that none who has ever consciously tasted its sweetness could forget it for a moment, or, in real fact, come out of it; once dissolved, the mind can never form itself again in the egoic shape, just as the sugar doll once dissolved in water can never again resume its former shape. All beauty, all joy, all power is there—for that is what religions call God and philosophies the Absolute. Only

[1] All arguments about whether God has a form or not are supreme folly. As all forms are His (in part), none can be called (exclusively) His. Cf. GH. 13 : 2.

[2] *or*: perform such mortifications: *tvameva paramam tattvamataḥ kim paritapyase*?

[3] R renders this: "through realising thy identity with Brahman"; the text has only *sadekatva vilokanena*.

our self-conscious effort, our ego-mind's futile struggles, stand between us and that infinite eternal Peace. "Let go!" as Krishnamurti warns us, for tension and strain in the petty self diverts our attention there and we can no longer 'see' the 'Goal'. "Effort is to be made till we realise all effort is unavailing," adds Swami Ramdas, and it is easy to see the Advaitin and the Devotee here speak the same language. Effortlessly, spontaneously, acting without passion or attachment, the soul is to 'play' here and there in the 'world'; thus it realises the great Dramatist who composed this mighty Play and silently watches its progress from the 'wings' behind the scene, guiding it at times with His prompt-book.

Worldly things, things we see or hear, cannot long attract the real seeker for the Truth, but on dropping them he will not replace their lure with a new pride of 'renunciation'—pointing to his yellow robe, his beggar's bowl, his bare feet and ragged cloth, as proof of his spiritual gianthood; these things are very easy to obtain! In reality there is nothing to 'renounce' save the *idea* of possession and non-possession. When the mind that forms such opposite ideas is silenced, then in all its beauty the SELF is revealed, immortal, pure and radiant, formless, beyond good and evil, infinitely perfect. To know that SELF is quietly and imperceptibly to drop the veils which hide it from consciousness. And the soul can do that whenever it will, for the SELF is not something alien to be attained but the very soul itself. "What," cries Bhagavan Ramana, "was there ever a time when you did not know your self?" The question has but to be put thus to answer itself. Effort, strain, discouragement are supremely foolish for one who even once catches a glimpse of this.

The old, old ignorance is finally uprooted when we still the senses and the mind, holding it firmly on the Eternal, and realising that It shines in the very heart of the contemplating self.

28. The Worthy Pupil

1. This great scripture of Sankara's[1] is not to be given to just anyone—to the unbeliever, the ungrateful, the one of evil conduct or rascally mind.[2] (TU. 6 : 108) First of all, the pupil should be endued with calmness and self-control, with plenty of (other) virtues; (it is only) after that one may teach (him) thus: "All this (universe) is God, and you (yourself) are pure." He who tells the unwise and half-awakened that all is God will be consigned for it to the snare of a great hell.[3] (YV. 17 : 26-27)

2. (One may initiate) a pupil who is serviceable and tender,[4] devoted to **God**,[5] lovable, well-born and intelligent, (MkU. 1 : 1 : 49)

[1] Note this clear assignment of one of the Advaitic Upanishads to Sankarāchārya or to his disciples. The direct experience of Advaita truth had to be confirmed by the witness of Scripture, so these (later?) Upanishads appeared among men.

[2] Jesus said, "Do not cast your pearls before swine", and almost all religions have repeated the warning. There is an obvious danger in making the Advaita-truth into a verbal philosophy; the immature may use it as an excuse for all kinds of immorality: "I am the immaculate God; sin cannot touch me; it is only the body which sins, and I am not the body!"—and so on!

[3] *mahānaraka-jāleṣu.*

[4] *sevāparāya . . . hitaputrāya.*

[5] The text here reads: "devoted to Me" (*madbhaktāya*).

abstemious, in control of anger, attachment (to society) and the senses, not dependent on others,[1] and without egoism, expectations or property. (TU. 1 : 3)

But this great wisdom, given to all alike, will suddenly terminate the Play before the time; to keep the Game going, there must be fools as well as sages, sinners as well as saints; and armed with the weapon of this supreme fear-destroying knowledge, the wicked would destroy God's world. So the Initiate is warned not to initiate the unworthy, but to see first that the candidate has full self-control, a virtuous life, and a righteous kindly heart. Only such may learn that sin is indeed a 'no-thing' because all alike is God.

29. The Dawn of Wisdom

1. Only through the Lord's grace does the latent desire for the ONENESS come to birth . . . in a person;[2] (AG. 1. : 1) and the longing for Freedom arises in men when (their) good deeds mature at the end of many births.[3] (PU. 2 : 17) Only in him whose final birth this is, is there the great peace, the stainless and free knowledge like the sweetest

[1] *or*: not jealous. One who depends on others is not free to give his *whole* heart to the spiritual 'search', but must look out that others do not come between him and his patrons.

[2] *Īsvarānugrahādeva pumsamadvaita-vāsanā . . . upajāyate.*

[3] *janmanāmante.*

flute. (YV. 19 : 9) Familiar from early childhood through (constant) practice[1] with such good things as the scriptures and saintly company, a man with effort develops himself (into) a benefactor. (YV. Mu. 3) (Then) nobility, sincerity and friendliness, mildness and frankness and wisdom[2] take refuge with him, as women usually (cling to) the house. All people desire him (who is) attractive for his gentle ways, as animals (follow) the flute's sweet tune through forest (after) forest. (YV. 10 : 10-11) Then he resorts to a true Guru, serves (him) for a long time, and (after that) asks him something about bondage and release. (PU. 2 : 17)

2. The natural tendency of a man's mind is broken up on making Enquiry : giving up ordinary meditation,[3] becoming ever accustomed to the Self,[4] dropping the visible which ought to be left and going towards the End which should be gained, ever perceiving the seer and not noticing the non-seer, (being one)

[1] *or* : training. Much depends on early education.

[2] *āryatā hṛdyatā maitrī saumyatā muktatā jñatā.*

[3] *mananam tyajataḥ* ; meditation is a mental process, rationative, egoistic.

[4] *nityam kincitpariṇatātmanaḥ.*

whose life is awake in the highest Truth to be known [1] and fast asleep to the revolving delusive world through an extremely ripe detachment from things both disagreeable and delightful, having dug up as with a spade the snare in the net of worldly 'impressions'—the desirelessness and harmlessness of such a one snap the knot of the heart.[2] (YV. 15 : 1-4)

3. As dirty water is cleaned by the fruit of the *kātak*-nut, so under the influence of knowledge one's own nature is wholly purified. (When) passionless and unattracted (by objects), independent and leaning on nothing (outside), the mind escapes from delusion like a bird from a cage, and begins to roam (freely with its every) doubt pacified, (its) badness and love of pleasure gone, (then), risen up from the Self by means of a thorough enquiry into its own nature, the mind wholly full within shines like the full moon, (while) down here Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and Sankara [3] become propitious. So long as such (questions) as "Who am I?" and "Whence came

[1] V renders: "who though alive enjoy wakefulness in the supreme essence of Jnana".

[2] *i.e.*, break its ignorant ties (to the world), a frequent phrase.

[3] The deity Siva, here, not the philosopher S'ankarācārya.

this (world)?" are not pondered within (the heart), so long does the pomp of the world continue like a darkness.[1] (YV. 15 : 5-9)

4. Thinking of Him, talking of Him, and explaining Him to one another, learned sages make practice of that One Highest Being.[2] (YV. 6 : 108) Elsewhere four means (of attaining Him) have been listed by the sages, wherein alone is true steadiness in the Real and in whose absence one cannot succeed, . . . For they say that only aspirants full of discernment and indifference (to the 'world') and virtues like calmness[3] are fit to know God. (VC. 18, 17) Wholly freed from desire and dislike, eager to do good to all beings, firm in understanding and perseverance—such a one can proceed to the highest state. (AG. 2 : 24)

The desire for self-realisation comes only when the soul has matured through great experiences and has been able to receive God's grace. Such a one is from earliest childhood devoted to all that is good, to holy books and men; as he grows up, he comes to be known

[1] *koaham kathamidam ceti yāvannāntarvicāritam* I
samsārāḍambaram tāvadandhakāropamam sthitam II

[2] *Cf.* § 3 : 3 and many passages in the *Bhāgavatam*.

[3] In § 34 these qualifications are treated in detail, as laid down by the books ascribed to Sankara. Vasistha insists mainly on personal experience of 'omnidentity'.

by many acts of charity and kindliness. All the virtues blossom out in him, and his gentleness draws to him all his neighbours ; even in the street little children follow him just to touch his hand, as they did to Jesus and Muḥammed. He is ready then to seek a perfect Guru, to serve him faithfully for many years, and then to learn from him.

Introspection breaks up the mind's outgoing tendencies and draws the soul further and further in towards the hidden centre, where in silent peace the Real SELF abides. Slowly the pupil ceases to notice outer things, being wholly absorbed in the infinite spaces within and steadily more and more indifferent to pleasure and pain alike. His reactions to injustice and offences are with meek compassion, for he neither seeks what he has not, nor tries to retain what he has—being interested solely in what he *is*. Thus all bondages fall away from him, and he comes face to face with the SELF that he has really ever been.

Self-knowledge purifies the whole nature, just as a catalyst precipitates crystals from a supersaturated solution. Freed from all attachments, the soul is also freed from all delusion ; it flies naturally into the open sky of Wisdom. His mind is a fire of light, keen, alert, profoundly wise, gentle and sweetly humorous ; all nature runs to serve him who has overcome his own narrow self and entered the Self of all. Such a blissful state can come when the soul really knows itself by a direct introspective search into its own nature and the source of everything.

The company of sages and saints is a great help for this, for they talk together of these things and keep the mind always on them ; to fit one for such company one must already be firmly discerning of what is real, true, important, desirable, and of what is 'false', trivial and unworthy of attention. There must also be

a sincere distaste for all that does not actively help that search, the crown of virtues like self-control, sweetness and steadiness, and a resolute all-conquering will to overcome all obstacles, to strip away the dark veils and disclose the effulgent Self within.

30. Three Means of Gaining Wisdom

1. Now without a Guru's teaching and the meaning of Scripture the Self cannot be[1] realised; only by means of this combination can the knowledge of one's own self shine out bright. After bringing together for a long time Guru, Scripture meaning, and willing Pupil, as in a (single) day a man comes to engage in good conduct and in Self-knowledge. (YV. 30 : 130-131) (so, my child), bring about the eradication of (ego) by the Guru's power, the meaning of Scripture and devoted controls of (your) self. (YV. 31 : 3) Even the talk of a child is to be accepted[2] (when) consistent with propriety,[3] (while) other (talk), even a saying of the Creator, is to be rejected like a straw! (YV. Mu. 102)

[1] *lit*: is not.

[2] A truly Theosophical attitude of tolerance, this; cf. GI 22 : 2.

[3] *i.e.*, with Scripture, the Guru's words, and one's own experience. So the Buddha taught that His own teachings are to be judged by the reason. Skt. text: *yukti yuktamupādeyam vacanam bālakādapi*.

2. Not through Scripture or Guru alone is the Supreme Lord seen; the Self is seen only by one's own self by means of an intelligence rooted in truthfulness.[1] (YV. 41 : 30) (But) that (self) can only be enquired into and most surely achieved by ploughing[2] the Scriptures —thus (is it) to be taught as a certainty: in this sense, understanding comes through enquiry into the Scriptures. (YV. Mu. 55)

There are three great aids along the Path, and without these it is hard indeed to tread it. First comes the guidance of Revelation, the teachings of great saints and sages who long ago trod that way, holy books and scriptures—as explained in the words and living example of the chosen Teacher, and lastly, the strenuous effort of the pupil himself steadily to penetrate his own heart's recesses, to find the Inner Ruler there by enquiry and a noble dedicated life. The wise do not prefer one sage to another, nor do they despise wisdom wherever they may find it (cf. § 47 : 6). They see good in Capitalism and in Communism, they learn from Buddhist, Catholic and Spiritist—nay, even from the human sacrifices and drunken orgies of savage cults. What seems true, from any source, they accept; what seems untrue, even in the mouth of an angel or a god, they unhesitatingly spurn away.

Relying on Scripture and Teacher as guides, he does not fancy they can do his work for him; patiently, sincerely and earnestly he strives by his own effort to

[1] It is very hard to be both intelligent and totally sincere, when we look into our own hidden motives.

[2] *i.e.*, studying deeply.

enter the inmost truth. The experiences of his predecessors on the spiritual Path, whether given him through personal contact or in the books they left behind, are his sure and reliable leaders. But note that it is the *meaning*, not the mere words, of Scripture which is of value.

31. The Spiritual Teacher

1. It is hard to give up sense-objects, hard to see the truth, hard to be in[1] the Natural State[2] without a Guru's kindness.[3] (MU. 4 : 27) Now the syllable GU means 'darkness', while the syllable RU means 'dispeller'; because of (his) being the dispeller of darkness is the Guru named thus. (ATU. 16) For men down here to overcome the manifold world the meeting of saint with saint is in every way[4] helpful; . . . (then) what (need is there) for him in charities, what in pilgrimages, what in mortifications, and what in rites? (YV. Mu. 72, 81) (But while) it is easy to become intimate with bad people, it is difficult (even) to meet a good man. (YV. 2 : 145)

[1] *lit:* to get, attain to.

[2] here expressed as *sahajāvasthā*, the easily obtained state.

[3] As vision enters through the eye and sound through the ear, so by means of the Guru the soul enters into God.

[4] *lit*: everywhere (*sarvatropakaroti*), *or*: an unfailing means.

2. Let him who would know the truth of the Self[1] approach a wise Guru, from whom (he may gain) release from bondage. (VC. 32) (That) true Teacher (must be) a man of faith, from a good family, versed in the Scriptures, affectionate and virtuous, sincere[2] in doing good to all beings,[3] (MkU. 1 : 2 : 6) sinless and passionless, one who is rich in God[4] and withdrawn into God, peaceful as a fire without fuel, a sea of motiveless[5] kindness, and a friend of true people who prostrate (to him).[6] (VC. 33)

3. Having pleased that Teacher with (his) devotion and by humble and modest acts of service, let him draw near to him when (in a) gracious (mood) and ask what is to be known about the Self. (VC. 34) Now, whether fool or learned, he who is roused[7] to the Truth by the clarity of the Guru's wisdom has no (more) anxiety about the ocean of birth and death;

[1] *tattva jijñāsurātmanaḥ*.
[2] *or*: does not hold crooked (heretical) views (*akuṭilam*).
[3] *sarvabhūtahite ratam*.
[4] *i.e.*, a supreme knower of God (*brahmavittamaḥ*)
[5] *or*: spontaneous; *i.e.* impartial
[6] *or*: (to God); *i.e.*, to devotees
[7] *or*: awakened

(AG. 2 : 23) the one who receives the grace of his spoken teaching is made pure in will and comes to rest like a drop of oil upon a mirror. (YV. 43 : 98)

4. In the three worlds there is none at all greater than the Guru; . . . as is the Guru, so too is the Lord; as the Lord is to be adored with deep devotion, so also the Guru—there is no difference between them.[1] . . . One should feel with devotion the oneness of Guru, God and the Self; (YSU. 5 : 56, 58-59) (yes), he may *feel* the oneness, (but) never at any time *act* the oneness;[2] (there is indeed) oneness in the three worlds, but no oneness towards the Guru. (Tat. 87)[3]

5. The Guru alone is the highest God, the Guru alone the final Goal, the Guru alone is the utmost Knowledge, the Guru alone the supreme Resort, (ATU. 17) the Guru alone is God in person, no other. (BVU. 31) (Yet) where mind and voice cannot explain, how

[1] *Cf.* the similar account in GN 12 : 3. This reverence for the spiritual Director is fundamental in Hindu thought, and characteristic also of Catholic practice.

[2] He must never be treated with such familiarity as a sense of 'oneness' with him might easily induce.

[3] Quoted in *Mahayoga*, p. 206.

indeed (can) the Guru's teaching (avail) there? But when he has uttered this speech of a Teacher united with Him,[1] it shines forth as brightly as the Truth (itself). (AG. 2 : 40)

It is possible to tread the Path alone, but very difficult; a Guide's help is immensely valuable, for one who has seen the road can show it to another. This is why all the religions advocate *satsang*, the company of a saintly person or of saintly books for those who would be saints. Indeed, one who has this company needs no outer ceremony or prescribed activity; he glides naturally along the stream that leads to Liberation. The one trouble is, of course, that saintly people are rare, while the other kind are everywhere to be found!

The aspirant must choose his spiritual teacher with the utmost care, for an unworthy Guru is worse than none at all, his advice may well lead to total spiritual ruin. He must himself obviously be one who *knows* from direct experience, and also one who is kind and eager to help, pure, calm and devoted to the ONE.

Having found such, the aspirant should cling to him and 'serve' him devotedly, and then ask him humbly at the proper time to point out spiritual Reality. With such a Teacher's aid, given by words, example and very presence, he will soon know for himself what frees the soul from every kind of bondage and immerses it in ceaseless and causeless peace.

Because such a Guru helps to reveal the ONE, whom we call God, we do not err in regarding him as himself God manifest. Indeed, that is exactly what he is—for there is nothing else but God anywhere, every

[1] So the Catholics hold that the Pope is infallible *when* he speaks as the inspired teacher of the world for faith and morals—not otherwise.

individual self is only He, and it is His grace which provides the Guru and gives power to his words. Seeing God in all, the successful aspirant recognises Him in the person of the Guru; yes, but more than that, finds Him also in his own 'little self'. This must not, will not, however, lead him to lessen his respect for the Guru; so long as pupilship lasts the pupil must look on his Teacher as 'separate' from him. When the ONE is seen everywhere, in everyone, then it is time to bid farewell to and part from His shadow known hitherto as 'Teacher', rather than stay with him while looking on him with decreasing devotion.

While recognising God in the Guru, as in all things else, the aspirant must, however, remember that even God in that limited form cannot express in word or deed *all* the Truth; infinite, it transcends all expression. Yet the Guru's utterance serves as a means to awaken that spiritual discernment by which the initiated disciple can perceive the Truth in all its ineffable perfection.

32. The Scriptures

1. I well remember reading (about) the Three (Ways to) Union (with God) from the Veda (which is) wonderfully adapted to the age and the intelligence[1] of men, (becoming) smaller with the growth (of man);[2] all the many readings (have) one meaning, and the

[1] *or*: devotion.

[2] V renders: "and will be more and more understood with the growth of intelligence".

entire (collection of) the Puranas (also) move forward together with the age.[1] (YV. 29: 162-163) Only the one of devoted respect for the authority of Revelation is firm in his own duty and (so in) the purifying of himself.[2] To the pure-minded (comes) knowledge of the Supreme Self,[3] and by that (knowledge) alone is the world destroyed by the root.[4] (VC. 148)

2. (Yet) those who by (over-much) learning have fallen into the snare of books are confused by them;[5] (when) one's own self is a form of the Light, how can that Light shine through a book? (YSU. 1: 4-5) Now the study of Scripture is fruitless when one does not know the highest Truth, while when one does know the highest Truth the study of Scripture is

[1] We seem here to have a remarkable teaching that Revelation is progressive; though it cannot really change, it does actually 'evolve' as changing human minds can see more in the old words. At last some new expression of the changeless Truth is needed by the changing world.

[2] Sankara is a great enthusiast for the authority of old Scripture. Here we read: *svadharma niṣṭha tayaivātma vis'uddhirasya.* Action guided by Revelation leads to the purification of mind, without which further progress is impossible.

[3] "The pure in heart shall see God."

[4] *or*: radically.

[5] Cf. § 36: 1; by creating pride and mental confusion, book-earning is a real obstacle to enlightenment.

equally fruitless.[1] The snare[2] of words is a great forest causing the mind to go astray; hence those who know the truth (from books) should (at once) earnestly try to realise the truth of the Self (by direct experience). (VC. 59-60)

3. Know that all Revelation is unessential,[3] all the Veda is ever unessential, know that every book is unessential, for I (alone) am the essential Consciousness.[4] Know that the 'Three Forms'[5] are unessential, all beings are ever unessential, and know that all truth is unessential, for I (alone) who pervade all things am the Ever-Blissful One.[6] (TU. 3 : 50-51)

Where no living Saint can be found, the aspirant must refer to written words left behind by Saints who have

[1] Books are misunderstood by the ignorant and superfluous for those who know by experience. Cf. what Narada says about mortification in GN 5 : 2.

[2] *or* : web, net.

[3] The word rendered here as 'unessential' is *asiddhi*, futile; not quite the same as *asat*, untrue.

[4] *satyam cidātmakaḥ*. We may also read 'the truth of consciousness' if we will.

[5] *or* : manifestations (*mūrti*); *i. e.*, Brahma, Siva and Vishnu—God in His Creative, Destructive and Sustaining aspects. All these are *nothing*, when compared with God in Himself, the One eternal Reality.

[6] *or* : Ever-Gracious (*sadāsivaḥ*). In this paragraph God is assumed to be the speaker.

passed on to the hidden worlds beyond our cognisance. Sacred Books, Vedas in every earthly tongue, adapted to the needs of every kind of soul and every age, do exist on earth; if we read these with faith and perseverance, we can realise the Truth and expose the falsity of this apparent 'world'.

Yet with this one caution. We must not misuse such books, treating them as infallible in every word, for all souls and for every changing circumstance. Times change, and the path in one age may not be suited for another. Nor can the exact meaning of any passage be found by learning or scholarship; varying interpretations have led to more hatred and bigotry, more cruel narrowness and self-conceit, than almost any other spiritual factor. The Truth is in the self, of every one; how can it be found on the written or printed page, outside that self? Unless the light shines in the reader's heart, he must inevitably misunderstand illumined Scriptures; as soon as that light has shone forth in his heart, why should he seek it outside? A great hindrance to spirituality is the wooden commentation of a Scripture, wrangling over the opinions of scholars about its grammatical forms and why a particular word was chosen. There is no end to such futilities for a fool; the serious seeker would do far better to brush them all aside and rely on his own unaided effort, rather than get entangled in such a jungle of clever words.

Helpful books may be, most certainly are, to a point; essential they can never be. For the Self the seeker seeks is at all times in himself, and *can* be found there without any outer aid at all. All that men know as truth, even the Scriptures and Rites, however holy, however ancient, are but toys for him who truly seeks the One. He may play with them in moments of comparative relaxation, but he will never look to them for success in his quest. Let the self rely upon the Self alone!

33. Enquiry into the Self

1. There is only one method[1] by continuous practice of which the Self may be sought out by a man—his own experience (together) with Scripture and the Guru. (YV. Mu. 55) A sickness does not go at the (mere utterance of a) word without drinking the medicine, nor is one freed (from ignorance) by the (mere) word 'GOD', without direct realisation.[2] (VC. 62) Just as an object can in no case appear without light, so Wisdom cannot dawn through any means other than Enquiry.[3] (A. 11) As the bearer of a torch should give it up after finding a certain[4] treasure, (so) should one, who has through knowledge found (the way to) what is to be known, afterwards give up the (said) knowledge.[5] (BVU. 36)

2. Union and Wisdom[6] are two ways to destroy the mind; Union turns the thought

[1] *or* : means (*vākyatā*).

[2] *aparokṣānubhavam*. This refutes the common idea that the mere utterance of God's Name can bring liberation, as in the parable of Ajāmila.

[3] *i. e.*, into the nature of what says 'I', and who that 'I' really is.

[4] *lit* : some (*kvacit*).

[5] Sri Ramakrishna often used this thought in his teachings.

[6] *Yoga* and *Jñāna* ; as it were, Practice and Theory.

(to) that only, and Wisdom (gives it) proper attention. (YV. 27 : 72) After long investigation Wisdom thinks thus: "I am free!" What is that? Does one from that moment become free by the thinking? Afterwards, only at the end of hundreds of births, is the man freed through Union.[1] . . . Apart from Union, Wisdom (alone) cannot lead to Freedom; also Union (alone) can never succeed without Wisdom. . . . So the aspirant must firmly practise both Wisdom and Union.[2] (YSU. 1 : 54-55, 51, 14)

3. Having totally stopped the ego and eliminated the various mistaken ideas[3] due to it, a man by discerning[4] the Inner Reality realises the truth to be "I am this (universe)". (VC. 304) When happiness is felt on seeing God, (then) is the Natural State attained. (MBU. 5 : 8) That happiness which (follows) on uniting the seen and sight (itself)

[1] Mere repeating of the *mahāvākyas* like "I am Brahma", "That art thou", leads nowhere and is childish folly, superstition.

[2] Faithful practice is 'love', and God is found through both knowledge (*jñāna*) and love (*bhakti*); one must both know the way *and* try to follow it.

[3] R reads: "through the stopping of the diverse mental waves". The word is *vikalpa*, nearer to 'errors'.

[4] *vivekādi*, which word suggests the Four Qualifications of § 34.

is the essential Reality ;[1] having (reached) that final ONENESS and gazed upon God, the mind is destroyed.[2] Where the mind does not arise (again), that is certainly the utmost happiness free from waning and increase, (for) it neither grows nor comes to an end. (YV. 31 : 11-12)

Teacher and written guide-book help, yes, but the traveller must keep his eyes alert and use his own intelligence to seek out the road in a foreign land. Direct experience alone is essential for the aspirant ; the uttering of a thousand magical phrases, performing a thousand holy rites, study of a million books, a billion good deeds, can never enlighten the dark mind, any more than waving a handkerchief on the roof can bring light into the cellar. To get the benefit of a medicine, you must drink it ; mere looking at the label and muttering its name will not help at all. Mere outer knowledge is needed only until the wisdom of Truth begins to dawn ; then it may be safely discarded as no longer of any use.

That wisdom, together with steady practice of self-purifying ways of moving towards conscious union with the One, these two are the real need. Wisdom says in a flash " I am only He " ; Yoga patiently repeats that realisation until it becomes unswerving nature. Neither alone suffices. A flash dies out like lightning in the sky ; mere practice, without the light to be practised, is

[1] *brahmadarśanajñāta sukha svarūpa siddhirbhavati.* When the 'seer' alone exists, both what he 'sees' and the awareness of *his* 'seeing' it merge into the silence of his own being, which is God. In that blissful awareness of nothing but God, the mind comes to an end, leaving deepest peace throughout.

[2] *tadantaikānta saṃvittyā brahma dṛṣṭyā manaḥ kṣayaḥ.*

vain. Union is experienced in full consciousness when the light by constant repetition becomes incessant.

And that can be only when the whole mode of mental activity founded on the ego-mind comes to an end, together with all the wishes and ideas built on that individual self. When this cloud of falsity is dispersed, the Sun shines out in the clear sky of eternal peace; then is the long awaited Day, then does the soul rejoice for ever in the perpetual vision of God, the Beatific Self.

CHAPTER SIX

ENTERING THE PATH

To know and choose the Truth, for its sake spurning every other thing, to cultivate all noble qualities, to aspire ceaselessly for God the only Real—this is the way to find, the path to tread. Patient struggle with mental habits which have enslaved the soul in the past, steady practice of solitude and contemplation, study of spiritual books, and society of saintly sages—this is no easy task. Effort must be long-enduring if victory is to be won; when the mind is calm in pure contentment, then can God be seen therein. It matters little where the scene of life be laid; the search is within, and outer circumstances affect it very little; the soul that rightly seeks will find, wherever its body may be placed.

34. The Four Qualifications

1. The fourfold practice[1] like Distaste[2] appears in men through (doing) the duty of their own caste and stage of life,[3] through

[1] *sādhanam catuṣṭayam*.

[2] *vairāgya*, otherwise called Disgust, Dislike, and implying Renunciation.

[3] *svavarṇās'ram dharmena* : The four castes are—teacher and scholar, soldier and lawyer, merchant and farmer, servant and labourer. The four stages of life are—Student, Householder, Benefactor, and Renouncer.

morality,[1] and through the pleasing of God.[2] (A. 3) First one should fully acquire Discernment between eternal and transitory things; next that Discontent with the enjoyment of fruits (both) here and in the next world; and in that way open out the Sixfold Perfections like Calmness, and the Longing for Freedom. (VC. 19)

2. *Discernment* is defined as a sure conviction in this form: "God is Truth and the world is false; He is eternal and this (universe) is transitory",[3] (VC. 20) for the nature of the Self is eternal, while the visible (world) is otherwise; he who is certain of this has assuredly a real and perfect Discernment. (A. 5)

3. That is *Distaste* when one has really come to detest fleeting experiences[4] through

[1] *or*: penance (*tapasā*), anything hard done for attaining God.

[2] Here the personal Liberating God, Hari, as in § 4 : 2-6.

[3] Note here the clear parallel between 'Truth' and 'eternal', and between 'false' and 'transitory' (*mithya* and *anitya*). The world is false because it is transitory, just as God is true because He is eternal. This is Sankara's teaching, and not that the world in itself is non-existent; its existence is relative and depends on the mind's imaginative powers. The world we see does not correspond exactly with the world as it really is. This famous couplet reads:

brahma satyam jaganmithyetyevam rūpo vinis'cayaḥ |
so ayam nityānitya vastu vivekaḥ samudāhṛtaḥ ||

[4] *or*: enjoyments (*bhoga*).

sight and hearing, etc., from such as the body right up to God's (world); (VC. 21) and that means such an unmitigated dislike for objects (from) (God's world) down to lifeless things, as the disgust (which is felt) only for a crow's excrement. (A. 4) From those very experiences (of life where) the fool's desire is born springs up the Distaste of the wise. (YV. 17 : 101) The fruit of Distaste is understanding, and the fruit of understanding is abstention; from the experience of one's own bliss (comes) peace, and this is only the fruit of (that) abstention. (VC. 419) The latent desire[1] for the Self is hidden by the net of 'impressions'[1] from the Not-Self; when these are destroyed by ceaseless abidance in the Self, it spontaneously shines out clear. (VC. 275) Thus is it said: "On giving up all things the Self remains; so long as all is not wholly given up, so long the Self cannot be gained."[2] (APU. 1 : 45)

4. The constant erasing of 'impressions', this is called *Calmness*; (A. 6) (it is) the

[1] *vāsanā*, in both places.

[2] This couplet reads:
sarva vastu pari tyāge s'eṣa ātmeti kathyate |
yāvatsarvam na samtyaktam tāvadātma na labhyate ||

condition of a mind steady on its own goal, (after) having again and again seen (their) defects and become separate from the host of sense-objects. (VC. 22)

The checking of outgoing thoughts, (A. 6) turning away from sense-objects and fixing both kinds of organs in their own centres—that is known as *Self-Control*. (VC. 23)

The total rejection of sense-objects, (A. 7) giving no support to outgoing thoughts (at all)—this is the highest *Withdrawal*. (VC. 23)

The bearing of all (present) troubles without (even) looking at them, having no anxiety (about the future) or regret (over the past)—that is called *Endurance*. (VC. 24)

Faith is well known to be devotion to the words of the Veda and of the Guru; (A. 8) the intellect's firm assent to the words of Scripture and the Guru as true, whereby the Reality is attained—(that) is called 'Faith' by the good. (VC. 25)

Now concentration of the mind upon the real Goal, (A. 8) constantly fixing the intellect always on the pure God, that is said to

be *Poise*, and not (a mere) indulgence of the mind (by diverting thoughts).[1] (VC. 26)

5. The desire for freedom by realizing one's own nature and so escaping from the bondages imagined by ignorance, from egoism to the body itself, (VC. 27) (crying), "O God, how and when shall I have release from the bondage of worldliness?"—that feeling, when it is really intense, is to be known (as) the *Longing for Freedom*.[2] (A. 8) Now only in him whose Distaste and Longing for Freedom are deep have (virtues) like Calmness (their) meaning and fruitfulness.[3] (VC. 29)

Sankara, clarifying the Advaita doctrine in his day, thus lays down the requirements for the Path, already touched on in our § 29 : 4. The first preliminary is a righteous life according to the duties accepted for the individual's 'state of life'; then naturally in the heart arises what is needed for the inner quest. In our times, many seem to think it is enough to be able to quote *Gītā* verses in Sanskrit, to breathe deeply through the nostrils in turn, or to stand ten minutes on the head without wobbling. But this is self-deception, for the moral foundation can never be omitted. Until a man has cleansed his feet of the foul slime of earthly passion and selfishness, he cannot safely set them on even the lowest rung of that supernal ladder.

[1] These Six 'Virtues' are: *sama*, *dama*, *uparati*, *titikṣa*, *s'raddhā*, *samādhāna*.

[2] *or*: aspiration (*mumukṣutva*).

[3] The really essential requirement is a disgust for all that is not God and a passionate desire for Him.

Discernment first: that tells us what is real and important, what is trivial and relatively false. This shows us later that God alone is real, the inner Self of all, while everything else is just a nothing, unworthy of the slightest attention from him who would be wise.

From this naturally arises *Distaste*, or Detachment; for he who has once seen God can never care again for lesser attractions, knowing them to be nothing at all. Nor is there any limit to the disgust for worldly things; let them produce pleasure or pain, conduce to happiness or misery for the individual or the multitudes of men—he knows that they are all wholly worthless, and spurns them from his mouth like a maggot accidentally taken in with a segment of apple. Even the sweetest are to him most contemptible, because they have power to draw and imprison the unwary soul. Allowing no exception to this general disdain, the aspirant naturally drops all 'worldly' contact, and in the 'spiritual' finds an ocean of delight hidden in the Self.

The *Six Virtues* are: (1) absolute steadiness in the quest, never to be disturbed or drawn away from its aim; (2) withdrawing the whole attention from outer things to the Inner Self; (3) complete mental freedom from any tendency to look outside for satisfaction; (4) perfect contentment with whatever conditions of life may come, knowing that all alike conduce to the Quest, if the soul be but altogether true to it; (5) full faith in the chosen method and the Guide chosen as the leader in it; and (6) steady and unwavering fixing of the heart and soul upon the Aim, which is God the One Self in all.

Yearning for Freedom is the intense longing for God, to serve whom and know whom is perfect freedom, and to have done for ever with the foolish imaginations of that petty ego-mind, in order to be aware always of blissful union with Him.

35. First Steps to Union

1. If you really have a craving for Freedom,[1] (then) you must avoid sense-objects from afar like poison, and like nectar always carefully cultivate Contentment, Kindness,[2] Forgiveness, Honesty, Peaceableness[3] and Self-Control. (VC. 82) The first step[4] to Union is the control of speech and the non-gathering of property,[5] (being) without expectation and desire,[6] and (having) a liking to be always alone. (VC. 367) Enquiry (comes) from being weary of experience,[7] and from (that) Enquiry (comes) the condemnation of experience; these (two) will fulfil each other like the sea and the rainclouds.[8] (YV. 21 : 40)

2. A learned sage skilled in practice of the Self should drop all acts[9] and try to be freed

[1] *mokṣasya kāṅkṣā yadi vai tavāsti.* Omnia vincit amor!

[2] *or* : compassion.

[3] *or* : calmness.

[4] *lit* : door.

[5] *or* : not accepting gifts—for these bring about an obligation to the giver, and so hinder the total *vairāgya* which is needed.

[6] *or* : activity.

[7] *or* : enjoyment, both pleasure and pain (*bhoga*).

[8] Search into the Self causes distaste for other enjoyments, and that in turn increases the eagerness for the Quest.

[9] There *is* a stage where total withdrawal from external activities is necessary; prophets retire to caves or mountains before their mission.

from the chain of rebirth. (VC. 10) Sitting in a lonely spot, desireless and with the senses under control, he should feel that One Endless Self without (any) other thought in the mind. (AB. 38) The Holy Abode can be reached (either) by the series: the practice of Distaste, the meaning of Scripture, Intelligence, the Spiritual Teacher and Self-Control—or even by Intelligence alone. (If) there be a keen[1] and stainless understanding (able) to awaken (a man), he can reach the Eternal who is to be reached, even if he lack all (other) requirements. (YV. 25 : 3-4)

3. Steadiness in the practices laid down by the Guru, (so) it is declared, will gradually give success in the same birth, or at any rate in (several) births. The second (way) is by oneself alone meditating on something surely gained through intelligence; (then) the attainment of Wisdom comes like the fruit fallen from the sky.[2] (YV. 19 : 13-14)

Now in a sense the fourth qualification is the most vital, for without it none will even think of the Path at all, while with it anyone can get the other needed

[1] *or*: subtle, fiery.

[2] *i.e.* spontaneously and without warning. Bh. Ramana neither had a Guru nor performed any '*tapas*' in this life.

qualities. It is as with a teacher: if she loves children, she will easily learn enough and how to teach them well, while without that love her work will be a hateful drudgery, her lessons a boredom for the class. The eager seeker naturally leaves all he does not seek; does the stamp-collector care for matchbox covers? Having the desired Goal in his mind, he is ever meditating on His perfections, and one by one they manifest in him. He becomes naturally quiet, solitude-loving, seeking gratification from none, caring little for talk and less for wealth beyond his body's barest needs—so that he may turn his whole attention to the Self within.

In such a soul the whirl of activity comes almost automatically to a calm, almost unnoticed, rest. He withdraws from worldly scenes into some quiet spot, where he may be undisturbed in his quest and feel, continuously brooding over him, that eternal Being, without any distraction arising from outside. Even if he has no other mental equipment, he can pursue that quest to the very end by seeking out the roots of the ego-mind; being essentially unreal, that mind fades away when closely gazed upon, just as a shadow disappears when the light itself is seen, as the stars fade before the sun.

Carefully following the detailed instructions of his chosen guide, be that a person or only a book, he will certainly succeed in that quest. For where one has found a village along a certain path, another in his turn is sure to find that village, if he keeps to the indicated path and does not stray into attractive fields beside the way. Even without a guide at all, a mature soul like Bh. Ramana may come upon the Truth by merely looking into the nature of the mind and so discovering the Reality hidden by its clouds.

36. Obstacles in the Way

1. (It is) only because of latent desires for reputation,[1] scholarship,[2] and bodily comfort[3] (that) the desired Wisdom (often) does not come to people; wise men say that these three violent desires[4] are a mighty chain of iron to fetter the feel of one who seeks freedom from the prison of worldliness,[5] and that (once) freed from them one truly attains to Freedom. (VC. 271-272) The Yogi must (also) always avoid Fear, Anger and Sloth, too much of Sleep and too much of Wakefulness, too much of Food and Fasting.[6] (ANU. 27)

2. (Having) a mastery of self-knowledge and also the company of good men,[7] (with) the total giving up of 'impressions' and the

[1] *lokavāsanā*, *i.e.*, public opinion, the desire for fame and respect, eagerness to follow the views and customs of society.

[2] *śāstravāsanā*, *i.e.*, passion for too much Scriptural study, book-learning or 'spiritual gluttony'.

[3] *dehavāsanā*, *i.e.*, excessive care for bodily purity or cleanliness, the body's beauty, health and adornment.

[4] *or*: old tendencies, preferences, (*vāsanā*).

[5] How many have been held back by a mother's tears, by the fear of what others will think, by thoughts of possible physical suffering!

[6] The *Gītā* teaches the same balanced life to aspirants. Too much of even good things is bad, cf. *Gītā* 6 : 16-17.

[7] *i.e.*, fellow-practicants (*sādhusangam*).

control of the output of vital energy,[1] (XY. 28 : 128) unattached in heart, silent and calm, investigating the Doctrine[2]—he who does (what) comes to him has (already) severed the inner creeper[3] of the mind. The lopping of the branches is less important, the main (work is this) cutting of the root; by it you eradicate the tree of mind. (YV. 37 : 44-45)

The three greatest hindrances will generally be found to be the natural desires for a good name, for learning, and for a good body. For too often the Path hides its treader's real greatness from public view; because the natural intellect is obscured and the course of life unusual, men may think he has become a fool, unbalanced, or even insane. So too the desire to shine for great learning in the Scriptures—so often in the world mistaken as a sign of spiritual progress—because he can quote pages of the Vedas or Bhāgavatam, of the Qur'ān or Bible by heart, leads him astray into bye-paths of vanity and self-conceit. While over-careful attention to caste-rules and diet-restrictions meant for a lower stage, leads the aspirant to think himself purer than others who take meat or wine, or smoke (cf. GGS 37 : 4); and his boasted purity is only the old egoism cropping up again in a subtler and more dangerous form. The seeker is warned also to avoid excess in anything, and to live a sane balanced life, never yielding

[1] *prāṇaspandanirodhanam*; this includes celibacy, and the control of speech, emotions and physical activity. Much energy is wasted in excitement and restless movements of limbs, not to speak of 'tongue-wagging'!

[2] *i.e.*, of the oneness of all with God.

[3] *i.e.*, bondage. The idea is of a parasite clinging round its host and strangling it in its coils.

to passion, anxiety or inertia, but calmly persevering in methods which will uproot these altogether.

The mind can be cut away from its roots in lower 'worldliness' by the perfecting of self-discipline, the company of a Saint, calm study of its real nature, or detached performance of work which comes unsought. Having thus eliminated the mischievous 'ego-mind', there will be little need to worry over individual defects arising from this one source. Hours spent daily meditating on defects like gossip or irritability avail little before the benefit of even ten minutes considering the ego which spawns these, and so many other things.

37. Purifying the Mind

1. The gaining of mental purity through abundance of the virtues of Discernment and Distaste leads to Freedom, . . . and that purifying of the mind is to be done by the aspirant's (own) effort. When (it) is purified, this Freedom (appears) in him (like) a fruit in the hand.[1] (VC. 175, 181) (With) equal vision over all, in this way, . . . gradually and by personal[2] effort coax the childish mind;[3] when as the result of the practice of

[1] *i.e.* very clearly—a favourite simile in Sanskrit.

[2] *or* : manly.

[3] V renders: "Thou shouldst through thy equal vision over all, and thine own efforts, playfully check the childish mind from getting into impure vasanas and make it associate with the pure ones."

former births (good) habits[1] dawn in you, then that flower of practice will overthrow and crush the enemy. (YV. Mu. 12-13) (But) worldliness has grown up through hundreds of former births and can never be destroyed without long application.[2] (YV. 28 : 119)

2. Breaking (it) with the iron tool of Scripture and (good) company (turns) the painful (into) a pleasant thought; (so) with the mind (busy in) good acts (break) the (impure) mind. (YV. 13 : 8) There must be a certain output (of force) in crushing a belladonna flower, (or it may be) quite possible even without (effort) at all; but it is not so in crushing a thought.[3] Having quelled thought by thought alone, (or) mind by mind alone—to abide in your own self, what is so hard in these two (things)? (YV. 17 : 249-250) In this way matured by ploughing up[4] and knowing the Reality for certain, having given up even that glory yonder, (thus) control the stream of impressions. (YV. Mu. 16)

[1] *or*: impressions, prejudices, etc. (*vāsanā*).

[2] *janmāntaraśatābhyastā Rāma saṁsāra saṁsthitiḥ* |
sā cirābhyāsyogena vinā na kṣīyate kvacit ||

[3] Even to crush a tender flower takes some strength, but it is easier to check a thought. I wonder!

[4] *i.e.*, thoroughly investigating.

The egoistic taint corrupting the Mind is the one real enemy to Realization, just as a black cloth twisted round an electric bulb effectively hides its light, however bright it be. To remove that black veil, to free the mind from its egoism, this is the aspirant's task. And it can be achieved only by 'excess' of these same great qualities of Judgment (*krisis*) and Disdain (*apatheia*), to use the normal Western words, that the mind can be freed from that ego-veil. They can scrape the scum from the tank surface and open the pure water underneath to the bright sunlight. Nothing else is needed, nothing has to be created or gained anew; the Self, the Light, is there all the time. Freed of its covering, it will spontaneously appear. In this purifying work, experience shows the truth of the proverb "More haste, less speed"; the soft dripping of water smooths the rock surface more surely than the hammering of metal chisels, though it take more time.

Gently and gradually the work is done. As a child gradually loses interest in its toys and gives them away, so the mind loses contact with and all wish for 'worldly things', and finds its sole interest in itself. After all, this desire for Freedom rises very late in the long story of man's life; only in his last few births does he consciously seek the Goal, and the good habits and desires acquired during past ages of vast experience are the soft stream which wears away the mind's hard carapace of selfhood. It took ages to form that protective shell, behind which the intelligence could grow to the point where it could discriminate at all; the aspirant must give time for that armour-plating to be worn away, so that the mind may enter on its freedom. If one breaks the shell of a new-laid egg, no chick emerges; when the chick is ready to come out into the day, it breaks the shell from within by its own effort, and is at once strong enough to face life in freedom.

The knowledge gained from a Sage or his written words turns sorrow into joy and shows the meaning

behind every successive difficulty. As a needle can take out a thorn, so are bad habits removed in time by good habits—after which *all* habits can be dropped, and then the soul acts spontaneously, unbound by the effect of past acts or thoughts. Really it is very easy for the earnest practicant when ripe for the effort, thus to transform the mind by continual looking to the Self within, till at last *all* the past fades away and the mind assumes its own limpid purity.

38. Fate and Personal Effort

1. Fate does not exist, . . . Fate is always unreal; . . . (when) that Fate is imagined by fools, they crash down to ruin. (GYV. 2 : 8 : 13, 11, 16) That oldtime effort (of past lives) is certainly (what) is called by the word 'Fate'; (GYV. 2 : 6 : 35) Destiny, in the very shape of (past) Effort, is indeed the ruler (of life's events).[1] (GYV. 3 : 62 : 27) As someone strives, so exactly indeed does he enjoy the very same fruit (he seeks),[2] but it is not easily attained; fruit is not obtained down here by just anyone at all. (GYV. 2 : 7 : 19) The fruit will be exactly in proportion to what the effort may have been; thus (we see) Effort alone is 'Fate', and (so) indeed let it be!

[1] *pauruṣenaiva rūpena niyatirhi niyāmikā.*

[2] *yathā yathā prayatnaḥ syādbhavedās'u phalam tathā.*

(GYV. 2 : 6 : 2) Down here in the world indeed everything can only be got by full exertion and by all (kinds of) effort. (GYV. 2 : 4 : 8)[1]

2. Men who dread (re-birth) (should) seek refuge in their own honest effort, (YV. 20 : 3) and like a child cultivate the child's own unattached and innocent nature.[2] (SBU. 13 : 1) Only by one's own praiseworthy personal effort, in no other way, (YV. Mu. 5) is God attained in a moment. (YV. 13 : 39) There is no way to Happiness save by the total stilling of the mind—a matter of giving up by one's own personal exertion what is dear to oneself.[3] (MU. 4 : 90)

It is common for outsiders to reproach Hinduism with teaching a blind fatalism; confronted by difficulties or injustice, the man cries, "It is my fate, the result of my own *karmas*!" and does no more about it. But this is not a fair reproach. No Hindu Scripture of repute teaches such a supine attitude to life. Here we have a clear repudiation of the idea that any 'Fate' outside our direct control exists; the circumstances of our life are exactly those we have ourselves desired and worked for in the past. When we find them less

[1] The whole of this paragraph is derived from Atreya's citations from the original *Yoga Vāsiṣṭha*.

[2] *bālye tiṣṭhasedbāla svabhāvo asango niravadyo*. V renders this: "the absence of notions of right and wrong".

[3] *svepsitatyāga rūpiṇā*; here we have the real 'inner mortification' of Catholic Asceticism, far more valuable than mere 'outer renunciation'.

attractive now than they seemed in anticipation, we turn from them and seek others, thus radically changing our life and circumstances. When the new environment proves as unsatisfying as the old, we learn at last that the happiness we seek lies, not in outer things, but in our own attitude, and then we change that attitude, enter on the Path.

If a child has to be dragged from the womb by forceps, it starts life under a heavy handicap, which can be avoided if it comes out by its own effort, aided only by the unconscious thrust of the mother. So too, it is by the aspirant's own effort, helped by the unconscious urge of the Guru, that the free and spontaneous Goal is happily and swiftly won. Voluntarily giving up one's own choice and preference, one can bring to a stop the restless tossing of the mind ; in that perfect stillness is found the Happiness which has no end.

39. Unswerving Patience

1. The (world) can all be subdued only by him who has subdued the senses, the mind and intellect, together with such (passions) as lust and anger ; by no one else at all can that One yonder be made known.[1] (YSU. 33) If you at every moment avoid the following-up of thoughts,[2] then you will indeed gain non-mindedness and effect purification. (MU. 4 : 6)

[1] U reads : " and such a one is not tormented by any whatever ".

[2] *or* : adherence to mental habits, obeying prejudices ; *sankalpās' anusandhāna varjanam cetpratikṣanam*

2. Never is negligence to be allowed in the devoted clinging to God; neglect to practise the Knowledge (of God) is death.[1] (AAU. 14) So now he who, being led astray, swerves from the Natural State falls (very) low, and the rising (again) of (such) a fallen one will not be seen any more without (his coming to total) ruin. (VC. 328)

3. According to Scripture, one should not be impatient for success for the sake of pleasure;[2] when the success (comes) after a long time, a rich fruit fully ripened will be won.[3] (YV. 16 : 8) Saying "I, even I", this narrowness perishes[4] and the vast Expanse pervading the whole universe will manifest. (YV. 20 : 4)

4. Even after knowing the Reality, this strong beginningless impression "I indeed am the doer and the experiencer", which is the source of worldliness, survives;[5] that must be carefully driven out by means of (keeping)

[1] *pramādo brahma niṣṭhāyām na kartavyaḥ kadācana |*
pramādo mṛtyurityahuvidyāyām brahmavādinaḥ ||

[2] *i.e.*, for the sake of the bliss caused by attainment.

[3] Let everything come in its own good time, as the natural result of patient effort and God's grace.

[4] *or*: in this narrowness (one) goes to destruction.

[5] Even illumined Saints are still subject to temptations.

the vision turned inward upon the self. Down here the Sages have called the attenuation of (such) an impression (real) Freedom. (VC. 267) Now it is when one becomes used to ceaseless practice without (external) aid that one merges (in God) by absorbing that (mind when it has been) stripped of inner virtues and defects, and not (in any other way). (AG. 2 : 16)

But very rarely can such a victory be won by a single battle; often enough, in Churchill's famous words, it is only "by blood and tears, by toil and sweat". There is no 'short cut' to Heaven; God can only be known by this total transformation of the mind, the dissolving of the heart's being—as we are also warned by *Light on the Path*; and the ego screams with agony as the sharp axe is with steady hand laid to its root. This cutting is done when we cultivate so complete a detachment that in the self no reply is awakened to any event or person or thing; "until the eye becomes incapable of tears, it cannot see"; true vision is possible only after transcending all feelings. By the absence of instinctive response, by the total ceasing of the habitual thinking about objects in the field of the senses, the mind is at last subdued and God revealed.

Before the victory can be wholly won, there must be 'continual awareness' every moment of the day, waking or asleep. A moment's inattention to the Reality, a moment of diversion from the Self within to the senses and their reports—and the gain of many hours has been frittered away. The loss of effort to see God, even for a moment, is real 'death'—which the

mere escape of the soul from its fleshy envelope can never be.

Success comes only after prolonged and patient struggle; impatience really arises out of a desire for personal bliss in spiritual life, for which the soul has bartered away a worldly happiness. But that personal joy cannot be the real aim, for everything personal is limited, transient—wherein there is no real joy at all. The 'joy' we seek brings to the personality only its own destruction—or perhaps it were fairer to say its transcending beyond all limits we can conceive.

It is quite possible to see God, to *know* the Eternal, in a flash of real vision, and still to cling to the ego-enemy of that sublime 'experience'. Have we not heard of saints who say, "I have seen God . . . I was shown the ineffable glories of the Infinite," and thus show their continuing enslavement to the 'I'? In fact, the 'I" that speaks can never never be the 'I' that knows; the One cannot be spoken of, nor is the personal 'I' there, to see or know anything at all. With greater truth, St. Paul said, "There was one who . . .", proving thereby the reality of the vision. To cling to the idea of any achievement by the personal self, the 'I', is to prevent altogether the attainment of the Real; to remove that false impression is to rid the mind of ego, and to *see* God indeed.

40. Seeing God

By means of the All-Self[1] (comes) the cause of escape from bondage; there is nothing at

[1] *sarvātmanā*; here R brings in the new idea "to realize oneself as . . .", not in the text.

all beyond the All-Self.[1] Before the attack of the visible (world) that feeling of the All-Self is gained through being steady in the Eternal Self.[2] . . . Having given up all such things as duties and actions,[3], knowers of the Truth[4] are carefully to practise steadiness in the Eternal Self. . . . In control of the outward (tendencies lies) mental happiness, and in the happiness of the mind is seen the Highest Self;[5] when that is clearly seen, the chain of rebirth[6] is broken—(so) control of the external is the stepping-stone to Release. (VC. 339-340, 335)

God is seen only by Himself, known only through His own Being. "Spirit never can with mortal mate," and the personal self can never contact directly the Infinite Eternal; they are in nature fundamental opposites. It is only the Divine which is man's *real* self behind that dancing puppet, the ego; *this* can enter into union with the Divine, the Real Self in all. By steady abidance in that divine Inner Self alone, the

[1] *sarvātmabhāvāt*; R again interpolates the idea "There is nothing higher than the identity of oneself with the whole universe"—not in my copy of the text.

[2] By ceaseless 'practice of the Presence of God', the cosmic consciousness comes to be in the self.

[3] *or*: by excluding the objective world. Cf. the famous *Gītā* verse 18 : 66.

[4] *i.e.*, those who know the fact that there is but One Self in all.

[5] Not in sorrow but in joy is the Bridegroom seen.

[6] *bhavabandha*; *i.e.*, the need for coming to be.

'practice of the Presence of God', man can attain to God; mere duties and acts and rites, soever noble, cannot win for man any right to union with God; they are in their own sphere, 'natural', and can claim no authority over the 'supernatural'. God is seen only in the mirror of His own grace, when all is still as a deep mountain pool; and that mental stillness is true happiness for the mind, which finds in it the peace of a perfect rest. When the mind grows still, God can be seen reflected there, as the star's light shines on the water of a deep well at midnight.

41. Forest or Family

1. The passionate one wants to leave worldly life[1] in order to avoid trouble, (while) the desireless has no pain (even) there—he does not even feel the trouble. (AVG. 16 : 9) Oh joy! never does the knower of the Truth feel pain (in) the world, because this round universe is full of Him alone![2] (AVG. 17 : 2) The world of the ignorant is a flood of troubles, (while that) of the wise is full of bliss; the world of the blind is full of darkness, but (that) of the clear sighted[3] is bright. (YV. 29 : 48)

[1] *or*: one who is attached to the world wants to renounce it.

[2] *or*: himself alone. It reads:
yata ekena tenedam pūrṇam brahmāṇḍamaṇḍalam |

[3] *lit*: with good eyes (*sucakṣuṣaḥ*).

2. Some are caught up in worldly affairs, (but they are) cool and without worrying over things seen (around them) say, "I have no connection (with these)"; others are settled (calmly) in contemplation. If (they are) quite contented,[1] both of the two (groups) are happy people; there will be satisfaction[2] within (both), and that is the fruit of a ceaseless moral effort.[3] . . . The states of those enlightened in (the midst of) worldly work, and of those illumined in the forest, are both quite certainly equal; both undoubtedly go (straight) to the Goal; (YV. 25 : 12, 8-9) (for real aspirants) even a (busy) village is like a (quiet) wood.[4] (APU. 1 : 33)

3. The world of those burning with inner thirst (seems to be) a roaring conflagration, but the world of those who are cool within they find cool. That which is within all people becomes established (also) outside.[5] (YV. 25 : 24-25)[6] Feel (one) to be a friend,[7]

[1] *or:* cool (*pariśītalau*).

[2] *or:* coolness (*śītalatāya*).

[3] *ananta tapaḥ phalam.*

[4] *grāmoapi vipinopamaḥ*; *cf.* the teaching of the Gurus in GGS 28 : 4.

[5] *bhavatyakhila jantūnām yadantarstadbahiḥ sthitam.*

[6] Quoted in APU. 1 : 35-36.

[7] *or:* relative.

(and he is) a friend,[1] (while if one) be felt (as) a stranger,[2] (he is) a stranger.[2] (YV. 20 : 83) He who sees only a sincere friend (in) the most bitter enemy intent on killing him at once, he sees (the Real).[3] (YV. 29 : 8)

The instinct to run away from home to perform ascetic practices, to 'retire from the world' into some monastery or hermitage, is actually a sign of the immature soul, swayed by pride and passion and unready for the Path. One who at least intellectually understands there is only One, knows that He is to be found as readily in the vortex of worldly business as in the silent forest glade or the private cell. Knowing that *all* things are good, express His perfect goodness, he is happy wherever placed; right there he sets calmly and steadily to work, to find that Centre wherein all bliss resides. To feel trouble, pain, anxiety, despair, is the sign of spiritual childishness, to be outgrown after more experience in the 'world'. Such souls see only the gloomy side of material life, while the illumined find in that too the everlasting Light.

Some practicants quietly immerse themselves in the 'worldly' environment and remain detached, indifferent to its draw; others sink deep in the inmost silences, having nothing to do with the whirl around them. Neither of these can be looked on as superior; if truly detached, both alike are drowned in the ceaseless and uncaused bliss of the Self, wherein equally they will soon be for ever merged. It matters very very little to the mature whether he live in the noisy town or village,

[1] *or* : relative.

[2] *or* : foe. Note the high practical ethics underlying this teaching; if only the nations could follow it! No more war, 'cold' or 'hot'!

[3] *tamevākṛtrim mitram yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati.*

or in the serenity of the remotest forest; in either he can equally find the Omnipresent ONE.

Those who have passion within find passion everywhere without; those who bathe in the coolness of Spirit in their hearts find all the world is sweet and kind to them, helpful to their efforts. What we are in ourselves, that we reflect on to the 'world' around, which is really fashioned by our own inner mind. As we regard others, so they prove themselves to be; their attitude is only a reflex of our own; one who can realize the sinful and cruel foe to be really the all-loving God manifesting, the direct expression of the omnipresent Goodness—has found the Object of his search, and is thereby freed from every fear.

42. Guardians of Freedom

At Freedom's door four Doorkeepers are known: Calmness, Enquiry, Contentment, and Good Company the fourth;[1] these, or (at least) two or three of them, are to be assiduously cultivated. As (sentries) watch over the door in the King's Palace, (so) do these (guard the gate) of Freedom. Or (even) having dropped all (the others, at any rate) one must by every effort make friends with one (of them); when one is under control, (all) the four also come into control. (YV. Mu. 47-49)[2]

[1] *śamo vicāraḥ santoṣaścaturthaḥ sādhusangamaḥ.*

[2] These verses are also found in MU. 4 : 2-3.

Vasistha gives as the qualities which most surely open the door to the King's Palace of the Spirit the following: Peacefulness of heart and mind, Steadiness in the Search, total Surrender shown by joyful acceptance of whatever life may bring; and the company of a real Saint or Sage. Any two of these are enough; to their possessor the door swings wide, and he enters on the inmost recesses of the Path to the Real, the Sovereign Lord. Indeed any one of them will be enough, for the others readily come to help the seeker who perfectly possesses even one of these great qualities.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MEANS OF ATTAINMENT

Practices of contemplation and yoga are prescribed, so that the soul may enter that stillness of perfect ecstasy wherein God is eternally seen as the One everywhere present throughout creation and beyond. In that exquisite delight of God-Consciousness the petty bonds of selfhood melt away, and the soul knows itself to be really nothing else than He.

43. The Path of Knowledge[1]

In this way the enquiry into the meaning of (spiritual) sayings[2] will be *Study*, while the trained search[3] into (their) implications is *Meditation.* The steady and undivided attention of the intelligence to the clear meaning of such a passage, by these two (processes),

[1] The four stages may be summed up as: hear about, think over, brood upon, be merged in.

[2] *or*: sacred texts, more especially the great Utterances of the Upanishads: "I am God" (*Bṛhadāranyaka* 1 : 4 : 10), "That art thou" (*Chhāndogya* 6 : 8), and "I am He" (*Isopaniṣad* 17).

[3] *or*: skillful examination.

that is called *Brooding*. Having gradually given up (both) the (sense of being the) Brooder and the (act of conscious) Brooding, (when) the mind (being) like a blown-out lamp attains solely to the Brooded-on,[1] (that) is called *Ecstasy*.[2] (AAU. 33-35)

Here are the four stages of Introspection. *First*, the aspirant is given definite teaching on the Path, to which he listens carefully (*s'ravaṇa*). This teaching may come from a chosen Guru by word of mouth, or from the texts of some honoured Scripture or spiritual treatise—such as the Upanishads, Bhagavatam, Gita, Qur'an, Gospels, Gathas, Tao-Teh-ching, Japji, Imitation of Christ, or Light on the Path—it matters not at all which source is used, for all alike are inspired by the authentic Truth.

Next, he selects some one definite thought from the teaching thus given, and turns it over and over in his mind, savouring it, pondering on all its possible implications, deducing from it as an authoritative 'axiom' whatever ideas seem legitimately involved therein. This purely intellectual exercise is known as Meditation (*manana*) and will for Vedantins often build on one of the great *Mahāvākyas* of the Upanishads.

Then, the seeker passes further inwards. The reasoning mind sinks down, gives place to deeper layers that delight in a silent gaze rather than in talkative considerations. Contemplation (*nididhyāsan*) supervenes, the 'Prayer of Quiet', wherein the mind calmly and steadily absorbs itself into a single thought or vision—it may be formless or with form, either a seeming body or

[1] *or*: "like a lamp-flame placed in a windless spot" (U). *nirvāta dīpavaccittam*).

[2] This state of '*Samādhi*' is fully described in § 45.

an idea in words. But the mind does not wander into bye-paths of the chosen Truth or visible apparition; it gains full delight from its contented inward gaze, which by the very essence of that truth or beauty slowly permeates the heart and moulds it into the very form and nature of the Divine thus seen in its contemplation.

Last, imperceptibly developing out of the previous stage, the 'mind' is totally lost in the Object and is no longer aware of itself at all. No longer can it be said to contemplate—there is no 'mind' as such to contemplate, nor is there the separate Object for that contemplation. Both, together with the act itself, have become fused into one; and in that oneness of full blissful Realization is the highest Ecstasy (*samādhi*). The Path is trodden now, to the very end, and in the moveless stillness of eternal Quiet man and God are again consciously the undivided Unity.

44. The Eight Stages of Union

1. The Control of Mind and Body, Posture and the Control of Life-Force, Withdrawal, Contemplation, Brooding and Ecstasy are the eight sections [1] (of Union). (YSP. 2 : 29)

2. These are the ten *Bodily Controls*: Gentleness,[2] truth, honesty,[3] chastity, kindness, sincerity, forgiveness, firmness, temperance in food and cleanliness. (DU. 1 : 6) Conquest

[1] The 'Eight Limbs' are: *Yama*, *Niyama*, *Āsana*, *Prāṇāyāma*, *Pratyāhāra*, *Dhāraṇa*, *Dhyāna*, and *Samādhi*, the last being dealt with in § 45.

[2] *or* : Non-Violence, but in an active sense.

[3] *lit* : Non-Stealing, again positively regarded.

over cold and heat, victory over food and sleep, perpetual peace, and perseverance,[1] (MBU. 1 : 3) restraint of the group of (ten) organs[2] through the knowledge that all is God —all this Bodily Control so described must be practised over and over again. (A. 104)

3. Morality,[3] contentment, piety and generosity, worship of the Lord, together with the study of ascertained truth, modesty and resolution, prayer and vows (of austerity), (DU. 2 : 1) devotion to the Teacher, love for the true path and the experience of happily attained Reality, a delight in experiencing that Reality, the absence of society[4] while living in solitude, withdrawal of the mind from desired fruit (of action), and a mood of distaste, (MBU. 1 : 4) a tendency (towards) the like[5] and a disregard (for) the unlike—(all this) indeed is *Mental Control*; from (such) control of the mind the wise derive[6] supreme bliss. (A. 105)

[1] *or* : steadiness, persistence.
[2] *i.e.* five of conation and five of action.
[3] *or* : penance.
[4] *or* : desire for company.
[5] *i.e.*, what is consistent with the spiritual aim.
[6] *lit* : is made.

4. The right *Posture*[1] is only a comfortable seat (where) the thought may dwell a long time, (MBU. 1 : 5) wherein there can be unbroken thinking of God alone together with happiness; no other, which destroys happiness, (is right) . . . Having filled the gaze with Wisdom, one should see the world as full of God[2]—that is the most useful Gaze, and not looking at the tip of the nose. (A. 112, 116) To be absorbed through knowledge into the uniform God is the (real) Balance[3] of the Limbs; if (that is) not (there, then there is) no balance at all, but a (mere) stiffness like (that of) a withered tree. (A. 115) That is the best Poise of the mind which is (one of) non-doership; (YV. 25 : 15) that alone is the mood of the Absolute, that is the brightness of supreme repose. (MU. 4 : 7)

5. The control of all movements through the feeling of Divinity in all the mind's

[1] TU gives the following as useful *āsāns* (postures); Swastika, Gomukha, Padma, Vira, Simha, Bhadra, Mukta, Mayura and Sukha: they may be studied in books on Hatha-Yoga, but do not greatly concern us here, having no direct connection with Advaita.

[2] *dṛṣṭim jñānamayim kṛtvā paśyedbrahmamayam jagat.*

[3] *samādhāna*, which may well be taken up along with postures.

(changing) moods,[1] that is called the *Control of Life-Force*. (A. 118)

6. Withholding the mind from sense-objects and from the functions of the (ten) organs,[2] (MBU. 1 : 7) delighting the mind in the mind (itself) after having seen the Self in the (said) objects—that is known as the *Withdrawal* to be practised by aspirants (A. 121)[3] over and over again. (TU. 1 : 34)

7. Planting the mind firmly in (pure) Awareness (after) the said drawing away from objects around, having come to look upon the mind as made of thought, and (thus) merged it in the Self, then the intelligent one makes it contemplate the Self. (ANU. 15) He must (then) consider as that Self whatsoever he sees with eyes, . . . whatsoever he hears with ears. (YTU. 69-70) The supreme *Contemplation* is known by seeing God there wherever the mind goes,[4] and (by) concentrating the mind (on Him) alone. (A. 122)

8. The unsupported resting on this good and true thought "I am God alone (and

[1] *or* : states, thoughts, resolves, loves. God is in *all*, even our angers.

[2] *i.e.*, five of conation and five of action.

[3] The passages from A. 121-123 are found also in TU. 1 : 34-36.

[4] An extremely helpful and potent method.

nothing else)" is well-known by the word *Brooding*;[1] (A. 123) (it is) the recognition of the one Awareness in all bodies, (MBU. 1 : 9) which brings the utmost bliss. (A. 123)

A slightly different road leads to the same Goal. Here we have the Path outlined by Patanjali's 'Rāja-Yoga', the Royal Road to Union, and little need be added to the details given in our texts.

The would-be Master of Life must first thoroughly master himself in every part. So the first stage is a full control over the sensations and activities of the outer bodies by a clear, if at first only mental, realization that the all is but One. Where then are passionate desires, ambitions, angers, jealousies or hates? Who can be jealous of or hate himself?

Follows the equally essential control of the whole inner nature, the gaining of spiritual and mental qualifications, with the desire to subordinate everything to life's main purpose, the Eternal. This purification of the mind and heart gives endless joy to the real seeker.

Third comes consideration of the various postures in which the 'body' may be placed to facilitate Meditation and its deeper phases. Usually the commentators here stress purely physical aspects, prescribing certain bodily postures which help the mind to control its thought and so to dive within. These postures are good and helpful; many Upanishads describe them and their benefits in great detail, very obscure to the uninitiated. But our texts wisely remind us that the real 'posture' is spiritual and interior, a full devotion to the Quest, steadily gazing on the Truth once seen intellectually,

[1] While the *nididhyāsan* of § 43 is rather a mental process, the *dhyāna* of this section is supramental, close-akin to the 'contemplation' of the Christian Mystics.

until it can be known by direct inner experience. If used alone, all purely physical postures become a superstitious pretext for complacency, wherein lurks the poison of spiritual death ; yogis dream of indefinitely lengthened physical life, as though *that* were the desideratum ! Let the body, as the *Gītā* also tells us, take any comfortable position in which the mind need not have to think of it, to shift a leg, to readjust the back, to remove a sharp pebble from underneath.

Fourth, the commentators as a rule explain *Prāṇāyāma* as the control of Breath, drawing it in through one nostril, sending it to various centres of the occult body to arouse them, and then passing it out by the other nostril, and so on. We say nothing against all this, save that it should be attempted only by one with expert personal guidance ; but the *real* Breath-Control is something more—the recognition of God in all one thinks or feels or says or does. In this recognition lies the key to Truth.

Then comes the mind's turning inward from sense-objects, after finding in them the highest delight, and taking all its delight henceforth in its own Self—an act to be repeated faithfully again and again till perfect.

Next the mind withdraws altogether from everything which appears to it as 'outside' itself and concentrates wholly on the Self. When it sees or hears or thinks of anything 'outside', it at once connects that, identifies it, with the all-Self, seeing nothing but that One in everything ; this is true Contemplation.

And lastly the mind, of its own will and spontaneously, dwells upon the thought that all, including itself, is only He, who acts and feels in every body. This soon brings the practicant to the ecstatic bliss of *Samādhi*, in which he merges for evermore and altogether in that One Infinity.

45. Ecstasy

1. Entirely forgetting thought (itself) by making thought-waves changeless and then turning (them) into God, is recognised as *Ecstasy* and Wisdom, (A. 124) the unshaken State without egoism or indulging in[1] the pairs of opposites, steadier than Mount Meru. (APU. 1 : 49) The intense[2] practice of Contemplation[3] without (any) sense of the 'I', making the stream[4] of mental thoughts[5] into God, will (become) 'Conscious Ecstasy'.[6] (Mk U. 2 : 53)

2. Ecstasy is the forgetting of Brooding[7] (itself), (MBU. 1 : 10) the state of poise[8] between the individual and the Highest Self,[9] (YTU. 107) after gaining which, one looks on (all as) the same. (ANU. 16) Just as rocksalt,

[1] *or* : following after.

[2] *or* : protracted.

[3] *dhyāna*, the supra-mental blissful contemplation of Truth or Beauty.

[4] *or* : flood.

[5] Patanjali's 'mental modifications' (*vṛtti*).

[6] *samprajñāta samādhi*, also called 'savikalpa'.

[7] *dhyāna*. One forgets that one is engaged in contemplation for a while all memory of the 'I' itself fades out.

[8] *or* : equality.

[9] *samatā avasthā jīvātma paramātmanaḥ*.

comes to have the same (liquid) quality in water, so is the oneness of the Self and the mind. (VU. 2 : 75) Having wholly stilled (all) movement of the mind, this (condition) bestowing the utmost bliss is named the 'Unconscious Ecstasy'[1] dear to yogis. (MkU. 2 : 54) (Therein) supervenes the state of oneness of the individual and the Highest Self, devoid of the three aspects,[2] (an Ecstasy) whose nature is the utmost bliss characterised by pure Awareness. (SU. 2 : 11 : 1)[3]

3. Thus (the state of) those who through an inner coolness have seen this (whole world) of balanced qualities to be non-self is termed Ecstasy, (YV. 25 : 7)[4] unaffected by old impressions[5] and steady; and that alone is declared to be the (true) contemplation of the mind, that alone is a feeling of the Absolute, that alone is perpetual Stillness.[6] (APU. 1 : 29) Those who, even while carrying on the

[1] *asamprajñāta samādhi*, also called '*nirvikalpa*'.

[2] *e.g.*, seer, sight and seen; all becomes one being.

[3] Found also in Mk U. 2 : 54.

[4] Found also in APU. 1 : 28.

[5] *vāsanā*.

[6] *Cf.* the passage from MU. 4 : 7 in § 44 : 4.

world's actions,[1] are always awakened from (mere) mindhood and firmly abide in that truth of the One Self, are always fully ecstatic; while even (when) seated in a meditative pose and actually offering (holy) waters to the Creator, how can the bound, whose nature is restless, ever (enjoy) Ecstasy? (YV. 25 : 80-81) Only the extremely dispassionate can win to Ecstasy, only such a one can gain a steady enlightenment. It is the one enlightened in the Truth who gets release from bondage, and the free always experiences the happiness of the Self. (VC. 375)

4. Unreservedly and without difference, the Sage (merges) in the All-Pervading through the vanishing of limitations—like water in water, air in air, or light in light. (AB. 53) That state which remains after all thoughts are stilled, (moveless) like a rock, altogether freed from (both) waking and sleep—that is the supreme condition of the Natural State.[2] (When) the sense of 'I' dies

[1] It is an error to think that an ecstatic cannot live in the 'world'; many have been extremely active there, like St. Teresa of Alva. That state is known as *sahaja-samādhi*, the Christian 'Marriage of the Soul'.

[2] *svarūpa*, *lit*: the 'own form'.

and (all) difference is laid to rest, and the mind vibrates no more, that Awareness which (then) manifests is what is called the Natural State,[1] (MU. 5 : 6-7) that stage beyond all, which is like nothing down here, (YV. 27 : 47) that one form of Light which suddenly bursts asunder the difference between the individual soul and God. (SS. 97)

5. That (is) the stage (in) which good men,[2] having gained it (after)[3] one moment or a hundred years, the visible (world) and sight (itself) become identical, (the state) which causes no return (to birth). (YV. 24 : 129-130) Now at that time the thoughts directed to the Self are not at all known ; they are inferred (later) on being thrown up by the memory of the aroused (practicant).[4] (AAU. 36)[5] Having in this way induced Ecstasy for a long time, being intent on drinking the nectar of God, that renouncer (of thought)

[1] *lit*: the 'own form' (*svarūpa*).

[2] *sādhū*.

[3] *or*: (for).

[4] There is no 'I' in Ecstasy even to feel Bliss, there is only Bliss Itself. When one returns to the 'normal' state, one remembers the bliss as experienced—but by whom? It *is*, and is not experienced at all.

[5] *Cf.* the version in PU. 3 : 5.

becomes the Supreme Swan,[1] (though he may be) despised (by men). (MBU. 5 : 9)

Such mental states are beyond words, they cannot be expressed in words, but must be personally experienced if one would understand what they really are. Words cannot describe a sunset to one born blind. The words used in various spiritual books can only be faint indicators, milestones measuring out the distances the traveller has still to travel; they cannot take the journey for him, or even make it shorter or easier for him. Many will see no value in such indicators, preferring to wait until they taste the experience for themselves; but for those whom even defective statements of the truth encourage the Sages have found it wise to say what words can say. They will at any rate help the seeker to see how far he has come and to take encouragement for further efforts.

Ecstasy (*samādhi*) is a state of perfect poise and peace, wherein all thought ends and the mind rests in God, as salt rests when dissolved in water. All sense of the separate 'I' is lost, all restlessness of mind, all consciousness of 'outer' things falls off—nothing *is* but a calm and sweet awareness of God, within, without and all around.

There is no separate thinker any more, the very idea of thought and mind has gone, the individual stands merged—one and yet distinct—in the All-Self, whom it knows as in the fullest sense omnipresent. There is no subject, no object, no relationship between them now; all is the One. God and the individual soul are one. 'I' no longer think of Him, no longer love or crave for Him, no longer know of Him; there is no more an 'I' apart from Him to do these things. He alone *is*, or—

[1] *Paramahamsa*, a title for a supremely advanced soul like Sri Ramakrishna, but he may by no means be always recognised as such, may even be taken for insane. It is popularly said the swan can discern water in milk, the Sage Truth in illusion.

what is really the same—I alone *am*. For 'He' and 'I' are the One; all pronouns are lost in that ineffable union, which is the bliss of simple Awareness, devoid of all distinction or consciously separate knowledge. "I am this or that" is ignorance; "I *am*" is the fullest wisdom.

When the mind enters this perfect poise, when its own ideas, its sense of ego and individuality alike are lost, when it is timelessly still, pacified in the Absolute—it can be said to be in Ecstasy. It matters not at all in what the physical body or the brain may be busy—they will work according to the urge of their own nature and habits; hereafter their activity has not the slightest connection with the soul, it can leave no trace, has no effect or karmic consequence. Active in the 'world' the ecstatic may seem to be, as one sees his bodily movements, hears the words of his mouth, reads the books his hands have written, watches the play of many thoughts upon his countenance. All this—but the Sage himself is apart from all, merged in the Ever-Motionless, freed from change and mortality for evermore. The passionate and attached man may sit in any yogic posture, may wear his yellow robe or live in total nakedness, may eat the purest food or eat nothing at all; if his mind has not thus been lost in God, it is all a shallow pose, a mere pretence. Only he who has won through to total indifference and dispassion, who has been illumined with the light of the One Reality, can ever touch the silent water of Ecstasy, or plunge himself into the depths of the God-Ocean.

When he sees no difference anywhere, when all alike is but the One God shining with infinite light and beauty, then the Sage becomes that Light and is merged in the manifested God. Still and perpetual, if the body sleep or wake, be active or in repose, eternally freed from the least taint of ego-sense or the faintest throb of the mind's old thought-activity—then the Sage is one with

God. Nothing exists on earth to be useful as a simile for that perfection; no words have been invented which can tell of it. It is the vanishing of every barrier between the finite and the Infinite, the rending of the Veil of Isis, the attainment of all the ages' Goal.

Time is not there, nor Space; therein the seeker is unconscious of the countless ages spent in seeking Him, lost in the boundless joy of finding Him, the endless bliss of deep embrace. Who then can be brought again to birth in the misery of lower 'worlds' of separation? Where is the individual soul, to be caught again in matter? Where is the salt dissolved in the surging sea, the cloud dispersed in the radiant sky? Where is the spark of an extinguished flame? Such a state cannot be known, it *is*. While the soul is actively merged in God it sees, feels, knows nothing at all distinct from itself. Only when in certain cases it returns awhile to the consciousness of 'outer' things, to exhaust the last tendencies of its existing body, does some sense of that Ineffable arise in memory. Then its excessive blissfulness draws him back again into the aura of its influence, until he dives again and again below its surface and at last comes back no more. That One who ever *was* now *is*: what more can be said than that?

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE SEVEN COURTS

Those who spurn the Spirit wander longer in the dark night of worldliness until at last they hear the clarion call and look upwards to the Light. They then enter on the Path by a resolve to seek Truth at all costs, and by a steady clinging to righteousness, to spirituality and the saints. Then they give more time to the Inner Quest, and thus slowly purify the mind by contact with holy men and books, in lonely places where nature shows God's beauty. Growing more and more concerned with spiritual things, they come to despise the worldly, taking life as it comes, careless of joy or pain, not even trying to explain them to satisfy the mind. So they become known as 'saints'; round them devotees and pupils gather, while their example fires many around them to follow in their steps. Turning deeper in, away from these deceptive lures of fame, the real seeker steadily comes to see all as equally dream-like and the Reality shining forth behind them all in substantial attractiveness. He turns resolutely away from everything else, and gradually becomes unconscious of the noisy 'world', being all the time intent upon the Spirit. And now the fruit ripens and falls into his very hand; seeing nothing but the ONE, the soul becomes that ONE, the little self is lost in GOD and freed from every sort of limitation.

46. Pleasure-Seekers

There are two kinds of people,[1] the outward and the inward turned;[2] now hear the signs of these two important (groups), those (respectively) seeking pleasure and final bliss. "As I care very little for that (state) called Nirvana,[3] I prefer only the stream of rebirths!" (say the one type, and) the one who may thus be deemed the 'doer' is called the 'Outward-Turned'. Like a tortoise (whose) neck (at last) enters and clings to[4] the hole of a yoke in the tossing water,[5] (so) a man of discernment is born at the end of many births. (YV. 43 : 13-14)

We turn back a little now, to trace out this Path in somewhat fuller detail, so that each wanderer may see in the map of our book how far he himself has travelled towards that glorious Goal.

Two kinds of people live in the world: those who know and those who do not know. There are the

[1] *or*: personality.

[2] These are not quite the same as the Extroverts and Introverts of modern psychology, but rather those who seek for pleasure outside in sense-objects, and those who look inwards for the eternal bliss of the Self.

[3] The state of extinguishing of the personal self, like a flame 'blown out'. But it is *not* non-existence, rather supreme Being in itself.

[4] *or*: sticks in.

[5] *calārṇa vayugacchri kūrma grīvā praves'avat.*

blinded butterflies who flutter idly from one flower of sensation to another, and there are the keen-eyed falcons who fly straight into the sunlight, ignoring lower things. Fools, destined to linger more time among sense-pleasures on this or other worlds, are those for whom the spiritual has no lure, who rather dread the extinction of the petty personality which stands between them and the unspeakable bliss of the Super-personal. Such a soul, drawn by earth and its bodily delights, cannot but return again and again to the prison of a body; it is already encaged therein by its desire, and only the weary round of births and deaths can satisfy its hot lust for pleasurable experience in the things of physical incarnation.

47. The First Court: Right Resolve

1. (Then he says), "Enough of this futile rebirth[1] cluttered up with these (endless actions)! Why is (life) till the end of my days (to be) spent only on stupid actions?[2] Why, if (I am) altogether freed from so many actions (and their results), I shall have the most perfect rest! (YV. 43 : 15-16) Why should I alone remain a fool? I am (now resolved) to be seen with scriptures and good men!" Such a determination, derived from Distaste, is by the wise styled 'Right Resolve'.[3] (VU. 4 : 2 : 3)

[1] *or*: worldliness.

[2] *asārābat saṃsāravyavasthālam mamaitayā kiṃ karmabhiḥ paryuṣitairdinantaireva nīyate.*

[3] *śubhecchā, or*: a worthy desire.

2. One who is thus inwardly resolved (to seek the Real) is thus called the 'Inward-Turned':[1] (he asks,) "How shall I, having become discontented (with it), cross the ocean of worldliness?" When in this way (his) mind's purpose becomes the supreme Enquiry, he daily draws nearer to (full) Distaste in (his mind's) inner tendencies.[2] (YV. 43 : 16-18)

3. The First Stage arises on the analogy of the crow and the palmyra fruit[3] for those who are (already) largely purified by the union (of Discernment and Distaste) and by the accumulation of righteous deeds.[4] Such a soil could have come into being only through the blending of inner nectars, watered and tended by a careful sprinkling with the water of Discrimination. Now if by this partial (and initial) Enquiry it does not (at once) shine forth, its appearance is only to be encouraged by daily efforts, as a farmer (coaxes his tender) seedling. (YV. 43 : 47-49)

[1] *nivṛtta*, *i.e.*, homeward-bound (to God).

[2] *vāsanā*.

[3] *i.e.*, spontaneously, as a fruit knocked down by a crow seems to have fallen of itself from the sky.

[4] *samavayādvis'uddhānām samcayātpuṇyakarmaṇām*.

(Then) the First Stage will arise sweet with the fragrance of contentment, . . . and this single State, when well washed with inner surrenders,[1] (yields) fruit.[2] (AU.1 : 27-28)

4. Day after day (the aspirant) takes with delight to beautiful deeds[3] worthy of dedication (to his aim); he always shrinks from vulgar and stupid efforts, nor does he ever reveal secrets.[4] (YV. 43 : 18-19) Though hard-pressed by affliction, there is no confusion (in his mind) over what ought to be done.[5] (YV. 16 : 5) He keeps to righteous deeds, preferring gentle actions which cause no alarm to others; he is always afraid of sin,[6] and does not long for pleasure. He makes use of words suited to place and time, friendly, courteous, affectionate, charming and wise. (YV. 43 : 19-21)

5. By thought, deed and word[7] he seeks the company of[8] good men; he always devotes

[1] *antaranyāsām.*

[2] *i.e.*, it gives rise to the later stages.

[3] *lit* : deeds and beauties, a case of hendiadys.

[4] *i.e.*, he does not speak of his good deeds to others (?). U reads : "he does not enter into arguments on vulnerable points".

[5] His mind is clear on his duty even in the midst of crisis.

[6] *or* : anxious about sin ; *i.e.*, scrupulous.

[7] *lit* : by mind, action, voice.

[8] *or* : tries to serve, clings to ; *sajjanānupasevate.*

s time to[1] the study of Scripture (derived) ɔm any source whatsoever[2] Then such a one comes a man who has attained the sole rst Stage; the enquirer who is intent upon ınscending worldliness is (really) attached that Stage, while the rest are (only) supsed to be noble. (YV. 43 : 22-23)

6. First of all, (his) wisdom expands ough (his) joining of Scriptures and Saints.[3] V. 41 : 56) This First Stage is said (to take) form of practising (through) the union of ripture and the Saints[3] (that) Distaste ich bestows the Desire for Freedom.[4] V. 5 : 81)

But even such a soul, saturated with experiences, omes at last disgusted with pleasures, with sweets turn to dust and ashes in the mouth; some day it down to ask itself a question: "Why should I go and on with this meaningless activity age after age, never enjoy the rest and peace I have so difficultly ıed?" Then it decides to drop this senseless folly, seek the company of wise and pious men, to study books, and so learn how to reach that peace.

r : spends his time on.

atah kutas'cidāniya nityam s'āstrānyaveksate. Really a ing illustration of the catholicity of Hindu thought; it might ken as the motto for our own 'World Gospel Series'!

ajjana, *i.e.* those persons devoted to the Truth.

Iote how completely here Vasistha confirms the *catuṣṭayam* ankara given in § 34. Much of this account is found also in 1 : 4 : 2-10.

This stage arises naturally when the soul becomes mature enough to want it; it comes through choosing righteous conduct instead of wickedness and the gradual awakening of understanding, which day by day grows more complete and fruitful. It fills the soul's heart with a certain satisfaction to know that at last the road to peace has been entered on as it turns away from outward pleasures to the inmost delight of introspection. More and more this soul shows the trend of its inner nature by virtuous conduct, by sweetness of manner, trustworthiness and sincerity, a sure knowledge of what is right for him to do and avoid, with an unswerving resolve to keep away from the smallest sin or misdemeanour, even if this leads to death.

He spends more and more of his time in the company of Saints and the reading of their books, free from all bias in favour of any one religion or philosophy, and eager to seek Truth wherever it may be found. Out of this noble association blossoms naturally a deeper wisdom and a more earnest longing to be free.

48. The Second Court: Enquiry [1]

1. 'Enquiry'[2] is the Second (Stage). (YV. 41 : 57) The outward expression of good conduct arising from the practice of Distaste[3] (due to) contact with Scriptures and Saints, is what is defined as 'Enquiry'. (YV. 13 : 117)

2. Having come to the next stage of Union named Enquiry, (the man) resorts to eminent

[1] Paragraphs 2 and 3 are found also in AU. 1 : 10-14.

[2] *vicāraṇā.*

[3] *vairāgyābhyāsa.*

scholars, foremost in explaining and declaring the path proper[1] to Revelation and the Sacred Books—Contemplation, Brooding and Action.[2] Knowing the (various) levels of (their) meaning,[3] (he now has) full certainty of what is to be done and not to be done; he knows (this) because he has studied (deeply) like a householder (fully) acquainted with (his own) house. (YV. 43 : 24-25)

3. Even outwardly he (now) to some extent gives up the unstable excess of desire, self-conceit, spite, greed[4] and folly,[5] as a serpent (shakes off its) slough. Having thus become (more) intelligent by clinging to Scripture, (his) Guru and the Ṣaints, he duly masters (their) secrets[6] to perfection. (YV. 43 : 26-27)

From the Saints and their books the Seeker has now heard and learned the nature of the Truth (*s'ravaṇa*); turning away from all irrelevancies, he now dives deep into the study of that Truth (*manana*), in order to make it all his own. To help him in this research, he seeks

[1] *or* : good conduct (*sadācāra*).

[2] *dhāranā dhyāna karmanaḥ.*

[3] *lit* : the classification of things, or meanings ; U reads : "the proper divisions of words".

[4] Here the version in AU reads 'hypocrisy'.

[5] *madābhimāna matsarya dambhamohāti s'ayinām.*

[6] *i.e.*, the inner meanings of the text, esoteric knowledge.

the company of wise and learned men, expert in the oft-hidden meaning of the Scriptures, so that he may swiftly tread the Path of Knowledge (§ 43) to its Goal. Coming to understand fully the prescriptions and explanations of the Truth, with all that they imply, he becomes so familiar with religion and philosophy as to be able at once to discern right from wrong, true from false; so he is freed from defects in his outer conduct and inner nature, without special effort and as it were spontaneously.

49. The Third Court: Refinement

1. The Third is the feeling of Non-Concern,[1] (YV. 41 : 57) and this indeed is the most important (stage) permeating (all others). In this very same Third Stage the man is forsaken by all other thoughts,[2] (YV. 43 : 51) [3] (so) where by the practice of Enquiry and Right Resolve such a one is no (longer) attracted by sense-objects and (develops) a lessening of emotion, it is called the (stage of) 'Refining the Mind'.[4] (YV. 13 : 118) [5]

2. The other name for (this) Third Stage of Union is 'Non-Concern'. Then (it is that)

[1] *asangabhāvana.*

[2] *sankalpa*: U explains this as "expectation of reward for the good deeds done by him".

[3] Also found in AU. 1 : 29.

[4] *tanumānasā*, making the mind as fine as a thread.

[5] Also found in APU. 5 : 82.

the aspirant reclines as it were on a lover's pure bed of flowers and brings a moveless intellect to bear on the true meaning of Scripture texts.[1] Seated on stone benches . . . in hermitage retreats,[2] he wears away a lengthy lifetime with a restful series of spiritual talks,[3] (or) with roaming in lovely forest (after) forest to quieten the mind. Happy in (his) non-concern, he blissfully passes (his) time in the proper way by practising holy Scriptures and doing righteous deeds; only in this way can his insight into the reality of the Soul manifest.[4] Having reached the Third Stage, the enlightened one (now) has experience of himself. (YV. 43 : 28-33)[5]

3. (There are) two kinds of Non-Concern: hear this (much) of their difference: . . . Thus —the Ordinary (Non-Concern) is (also) named non-contact with objects of the world. (The man says:) " All is meted out by earlier

[1] This Stage more or less corresponds to the *Nididhyāsan* of § 43.

[2] *or*: the calm atmosphere of hermitages.

[3] *or*: conversations.

[4] *i.e.*, sees himself manifesting as the Universal Self—Cosmic Consciousness, in fact.

[5] Also found in AU. 1 : 15-19.

deeds[1] or else (it is) in the Lord's control. If either happiness (comes) or sorrow, is my doership there at all?[2] Enjoyment and Non-Enjoyment are (both) great diseases, and Wealth is a big calamity; through Separations only Reunions (come), and the Cares of the mind are real sicknesses, (while) Death again and again swallows all beings in (great) gulps!"[3] (Now) that is the (form of) Enquiry which stands as 'Ordinary Non-Concern', whereby—through joining together the presence of great souls, the absence of unreality, the use of self-perception, and vigorous efforts devoted to (making) steady practice[4]—Reality clearly bursts into view, coming up like a fruit in the hand.[5] (YV. 43 : 33, 35-40)

4. Having really put away such feelings (as may be) expressed in words like "I am not the doer, (but) the Lord is the doer, or a

[1] What has happened is the result of forces I myself set in play in the past.

[2] *i.e.*, I am not responsible for it now.

[3] By reasoning about life's events, he comes to a satisfactory explanation of them.

[4] *i.e.*, *satsang*, *vairāgya*, *vicāra*, *prayatna* and *abhyāsa*.

[5] *lit* : the pileluka Euphorbia (*karāmalakavat*) ; *i.e.*, clearly.

former action of mine", that Silence which is the quiet repose on the other side of the ocean of worldliness, (resting) in the essential Supreme Cause, is called the 'Best Non-Concern'.[1] That which is neither within nor without, neither below nor above, nor untaught in the sky, neither a thing nor a no-thing, neither unconscious nor aware, (which is) resorted to, shining and peaceful, yet non-radiant and non-feeling, beginningless (and yet) the youngest, unborn (and yet) beloved[2]—that is called the 'Best Non-Concern'. (YV. 43 : 41-44)

5. The sweet delight of Contentment, the pure bud of Duty, resting on the tip of the stalk of the mind (still) beset with the thorns of trouble,[3] (when it has) grown (into) lotuses of Discernment and therefore blossomed (under) the sunlight of Discrimination, brings forth the fruit of this Third Stage of 'Non-Concern'. (YV. 43 : 45-46)

[1] Here he no longer concerns himself with life's events, being silently absorbed in that Cosmic Consciousness already experienced at least once. This is really already Freedom, but it is not yet confirmed, made permanent.

[2] *Cf.* the description in Prelude 3.

[3] Effort is still needed, or the advanced soul will stagnate here and fall back later. Only by combining Duty with Contentment—*i.e.*, by unattached world-service—can the flower come to fruit.

By a swift-growing indifference to all but the Spiritual Quest, the soul now purifies his mind and makes it more and more subtle and refined, so as to fit it more clearly to realize spiritual truth. All other ideas now fall away from him save the yearning for God, the Reality; his previous efforts have freed him from the least attraction to worldly things and from the ever-tossing waves of emotion.

Calmly happy in that Quest, he reposes in the silent contemplation of the truths already perceived (*nididhyāsan*), withdrawn from scenes of bustle wherever the body may be—though it is true that in this stage the body generally moves to quiet retreats in woods or by the sea. There he spends his time in study and contemplation, in the sweet company of fellow-seekers, or at the feet of saintly Sages. Indifferent to results, he acts in natural and thought-free virtue, and so in time gains a true intuition of the inner self.

There are two kinds of Detachment; the lower is when one says, "What is, is the effect of my own past actions; why worry about it now? Or else it is the beloved Lord's manifested will; what could be better for me than that? So let these things come or go, in any case all is very well. Let me neither dread nor desire, neither welcome nor regret; whatever comes is best!"

The higher kind, led up to by this, is the silent acceptance of everything, without needing to think about it or to ascribe it to *karma* or to God's sweet will. Such a state of perfect self-surrender is, in fact, the attainment of total oneness with the All. It fructifies in a real Sainthood, whose value for mankind cannot be estimated—for of such are its Teachers, Leaders and Inspirers on the Spiritual Path.

50. Firstfruits of the Path

1. As for (these first) Three Stages, they are looked on as the Waking State; as it were, (a man) is awake in them because he follows the clear indications[1] of the intellect.[2] The nobility of the Perfect arises in those devoted to Union, on seeing which a desire for Freedom dawns in the simple (folk) likewise, (for in imitation) they joyfully do what is to be done and omit what should not be done. He who thus clings to[3] right conduct is (rightly) honoured as noble;[4] he who has withdrawn from worldly business according to the (requirements of) virtue, to (his own) conscience,[5] to Scripture, and to (traditional practice) is thus revered as noble[4] (also). The First (Stage) germinates (the seed), the Second blossoms in the soil, and the

[1] *or* : differences.

[2] *jāgratīvātra vispaṣṭam bheda buddhyanuvartanāt.* So far the Path has been trodden by his own effort ; he is about to enter the stages where further progress is spontaneous and due wholly to grace.

[3] *or* : stands by, adheres to.

[4] *i.e.*, a Saint (*ārya*), a very old word in this sense. Such a man teaches others and in their eyes appears already perfect. Here belong most of the greater 'Gurus' known in the outer world.

[5] *lit.* : mind. It may mean rather 'taste' here.

Third brings to fruit the highest nobility.[1] (YV. 43 : 62-66)

2. This noble Yogi, who has gathered pure thoughts[2] and abandoned the (love of) pleasure, on dying lives again (after) a long time (as) a Yogi.[3] (When) through the practice of the Three Stages ignorance vanishes away and perfect wisdom dawns in the mind like the rising of the full moon, (then) the awareness proper to a Yogi is unbroken and without beginning or end.[4] (YV. 43 : 67-69)

The three stages up to now are passed through in full consciousness, because in them the ego-self is still 'awake' and able to watch its progress through a steady increasing control of thought and desire. Such as have gone so far become 'world-teachers', and the very sight of them awakens a desire to become like them, so happy, so good, so wise and impersonally kind they are. They become known as 'Saints', 'Mahatmas', 'Gurus': thousands flock with adoration to their abodes, and round them rises a perpetual cloud of the incense of adulatory praise. Their books are eagerly bought and read, they are easily persuaded to open schools and *āshrams* where their disciples and adorers may come for

[1] *āryatvamuttamam.*

[2] *or*: desires (*sankalpa*).

[3] Those who *stop* at this level become '*Yogabhraṣṭa*' in the *Gītā* sense (6 : 42-43); they have to return to earth to resume their efforts in a new and holy birth.

[4] *nirvibhāga manādyante yogino yukta cetasaḥ.* By now the mind is pure; it has still to be lost for ever in the Infinite Self, whereafter the Yogi's awareness of absolute bliss becomes eternal.

darsʼan—and where the still-existing, though now drowsy, seed of egoism may be fed and watered till perhaps it springs up again into a dense and thorny forest weed. This is the danger of this stage, a danger which drives the wise Seeker far from men, into lonely places, disguised by the assumption of seeming madness or even of vicious or worldly habits. Such a Saint may hide himself behind apparent passion and violence, like Seshādriswāmi of Tiruvannāmalai, may appear like an opium-addict, a vagabond or thief, or pretend to be a half-wit or possessed. The discriminative cannot be put off by such a play-actor's disguise; but in such ways the earnest Seeker avoids the snare of worship, which ever flows towards the partially enlightened from those wholly in the dark. We can look out over the world today and recognise several who seem to have been caught in the snare of such adulation, who even seem to revel in the worship lavished on them by foolish devotees—though of course it is the fool who judges others, being himself blind to the real truth.

Such a Sage, partially attained, even if he stops short of the final goal so that he may enjoy the rewards already won, will some day resume his onward march. In another earthly life he takes up the thread again, and at last he reaches that eternal restfulness of bliss which is the real Awareness of the ONE.

51. The Fourth Court: Harmonising

The Fourth (Stage is one) of dissolving, marked by the fading out of 'impressions', . . . where the world really resembles a dream. (YV. 41 : 57, 62)[1] Through the

[1] Found also in APU. 5 : 82.

practice of the three (first) stages and influenced by the cessation of motive[1] in the mind, one is established in the pure 'harmony-self'[2] known (as) the 'Gaining of Harmony'.[3] (YV. 13 : 119)[4] Having reached (this) Fourth Stage, (men) see everything alike;[5] when the ONENESS is confirmed[6] and duality comes to an end, having explored[7] the Fourth Stage, they see (that) the world is a dream.[8] (YV. 43 : 69-70)[9]

What really so long perpetuates the illusion of a separate individual self is the continuous acting with desire or motive. When the soul learns to act simply as circumstances require, without the slightest concern over results favourable or the reverse to the actor, then the very root of that egoism is cut asunder. The old tendency towards one type of action rather than another, the old seeking for personal advantage or pleasure, simply fades away, and with it the whole structure of ego-mind simply ceases to exist.

[1] *or* : indifference to desire.

[2] : *satvātmani*.

[3] This rendering for the name of this Court, *Satvāpatti*, is supported by the description of its nature.

[4] Found also in VU. 4 : 2 : 6.

[5] *or* : everywhere, (*samam sarvam pas'yanti*).

[6] *or* : gains stabllity.

[7] *lit.* ; measured : *i.e.*, fully obtained, investigated (*mitāḥ*).

[8] This stage corresponds to the Dream State, wherein the Self manifests as the Radiant One, Taijasa.

[9] Found also both in AU. 1 : 30-31 and in VU. 4 : 2 : 12-13.

Hereafter the soul lives and acts in the 'world' as one lives in a dream, receiving impressions and performing deeds which have little or no logical result on the self; the ambitions and delights of the 'world' become unsubstantial, dreamlike; the whole force of the self is concentrated in the 'inner life' where alone it can find substance. Its entire being having now integrated with the One, it is naturally in perfect harmony with all the universe, which is the manifold manifestation of that One. To its consciousness all now appears equally as God; preferences and dislikes are forgotten; in realizing the One in All, the soul finds full peace and joy. To such a soul how can the storms and delusions of the 'outer world' be other than a dream?

52. The Fifth Court: Total Withdrawal

1. Through practice of the four stages, and as the fruit of Detachment, (arises) the growing marvel of the harmony[1] (already) spoken of, named 'Non-Contact';[2] (YV. 13 : 120)[3] the Fifth (stage then) develops, in the form of a bliss full of pure Awareness. There the Free[4] stands like one awake (yet) half asleep. (YV. 41 : 58)[5]

[1] V reads: "admiration for the Rhythm"—which does not seem clear to me.

[2] This stage of '*Asamsakti*' corresponds to the mystical peace of Prājña in the state of *suṣupti*, or 'deep sleep'.

[3] Also found in VU. 4 : 2 : 7.

[4] As Bh. Ramana points out, the four later stages are those of the Jñāni, who is already free from the illusion of 'ego'.

[5] Also found in APU. 5 ; 83.

2. On ascending to (this) Fifth (Stage) named the region of Deep Sleep, whereas the mind vanishes away (like) a cloud-bank in the autumn, only (pure) Being will remain. The mistaken idea of a 'world' arises no (more) because the mind has dissolved,[1] (so) the Fifth Stage is called the aspect of Deep Sleep. (All) the rest of (the man's) special characteristics being stilled, he stands (as) the ONENESS[2] alone. When dark duality has melted away and inner illumination has appeared, on reaching (this) Fifth Stage there will be only an intensely deep Sleep always joyous within, (while) outward activities[3] are remote.[4] Being always fully at peace, he seems as it were (ever) prone to sleep. (YV. 43 : 71-75)[5]

And then comes naturally, without special effort, the fruition of complete disdain for all but God, and a total withdrawal of interest from the 'without' to the 'within'. Even when using things of sense, the soul is now barely aware of their existence, seeing nothing

[1] *jagadvikalpo nodeti cittasyātra vilapanāt*.

[2] *Advaita, lit*: 'non-dual'.

[3] *or*: thoughts; *i.e.*, activities of mind or body, (*bahirvṛtti*).

[4] *or*: foreign. Some take this to mean that he acts only on the urging of others, his disciples or bystanders.

[5] Also found in AU. 1 : 33-36.

but the One Lord everywhere around. So in a sense, he no longer sees, touches, hears, thinks of, speaks about anything but God (*cf.* GH 41 : 5, GN 21 : 2, etc.). Lost, immersed in awareness of the Ever-Blissful, such a happy soul moves among the things of the 'world' with complete detachment, as a little child passes through the crowds in search of its missing mother. To those who watch, he seems like one half-asleep—acting as if unaware of what he does, hearing and speaking as though in trance—his consciousness being ever fixed on the soundless and invisible.

This sublime state is compared to the blissful 'unconscious' awareness in 'deep sleep'; the thinking mind thinks no more, the soul stands free in its own inherent greatness. If destined to play the part of a teacher of men, he answers questions, explains the Truth so far as words allow, reads, eats, walks—seemingly in every way a normal human being. The undiscerning may not realize the greatness of his achievement and may even say in their foolishness, "Why, he is just an ordinary man! Sitting on a sofa while devotees apply the fan, reading newspapers and eating the food we eat just like us, going for private purposes to the jungle as we do, accepting his adorers' praise like any worldly fellow greedy of flattery—how can you call that man a Sage or a Saint?"

Well, none but the Saint can know the Saint; it is he who has entered on this Stage who alone can understand its real nature. As Bh. Ramana used to say, "The Sage sees everything as you do, but he sees it all as nothing but his own self." Aware of the many, he can see it only as the One. The thought of acting outwardly is no longer there; such acts as he performs are either at the request of others or purely a spontaneous whim of his own. Thus he may perform ceremonies which to him are a mere play like every other action, because for many onlookers such rites may be the next

step of discipline in the path they are to tread. He may even join in songs written in 'his own' honour, for he knows that as everyone is but the Lord in human form all honour is the Lord's and goes only to Him; so there is no pride in that recital. For such a soul there is ever a deep changeless peace, a bliss having no boundary; for where can fear or anxiety be when *all* is the Beloved SELF?

53. The Sixth Court: Fading of the World

1. And (then) develops the Sixth Stage, of the form of 'Non-Perception of Things',[1] a condition very like a deep sleep moulded out of one intense bliss. (YV. 41 : 59)[2] By practising (those) Five Stages, (the Knower) comes to delight immensely in his own self through being unaware of inner and outer things, and (thus) by effort long directed towards the Highest he (attains full) Realization (of God.)[3] (YV. 13 : 121-122)[4]

2. (When) absolutely freed from desire (by) carrying out the practice of these (six)

[1] This stage of *Padārthābhāvanā*, like the *Turya* beyond deep sleep, is that of a full mystical bathing in God, dipping often in Him like the seagull in the waves, ready for a final dive into the mystic depths. It is the 'Spiritual Courtship' of the Western Mystics.

[2] Also found in APU. 5 : 84.

[3] *para prayuktena ciram prayatnenāvabodhanam.*

[4] Also found in both MU. 5 : 32-33 and VU. 4 : 2 : 8-9.

Stages, in due course the Seventh is attained,[1] the mystic ancient sleeping state,[2] wherein is neither the non-being nor the being of the Real, neither the 'I' nor yet the absence of the 'I'.[3] Meditation having come to a close, there is only the ALONE,[4] the ONENESS wholly free from fear. Without a tie (of heart,[5] all) doubt set at rest, the Liberated One is released from fancies; though un-extinguished, (the mind) is yet blown out, steady as a lamp in a picture. Void within and void without, like an empty pot in the sky, (he is also) full within and full without, like a full pot in the foaming ocean.[6] Such a one has indeed gained everything, while rather he (himself) has nothing (at all). (YV. 43 : 76-80)[7]

[1] In AU this line reads: *ṣaṣṭim turyābhidhāmanyo kramāt-patati bhūmikām.*

[2] *gūdha suptyākhyā . . . purātanā.* The soul is oblivious of the 'world' while in the blissful trance of God-union. Western Mystics calls this the 'Mystic Sleep'.

[3] *nāham nāpyanahamkṛtiḥ*; *lit*: "neither the 'I', nor even the absence of egoism" (or individuality).

[4] *āste advaitaikya.*

[5] The 'knot of the heart' is burst asunder.

[6] *antaḥ s'ūnyo bahiḥ s'ūnyaḥ s'ūnyakumbha ivāmbare*
antaḥ pūrṇo bahiḥ pūrṇaḥ pūrṇakumbha ivārnave ||—a musical couplet with great meaning!

[7] Also found in AU. 1 : 37-39.

3. The Liberated feel neither joy (nor) sorrow; being in a constancy of love-ecstasy, they either do something in the way of work spontaneously,[1] or not at all. Seeming to be only just about to awake, they carry on a course (of action) consistent with (their) former conduct, (acting just as) it comes (to them; they) arise like one at the same time both sleeping and awake. (YV. 13 : 126-147)[2]

4. By long practice of the six Stages, and through perceiving no difference (anywhere), that state which is entire devotion to one's own being is to be known as that of the threshold of merging in God. (YV. 13 : 123-124)[3]

Viewed from the plain, it is hard to judge the relative heights of mountain peaks; when one stands on one lofty eminence, one can see others towering higher yet. So to us down here there seems but little difference between the later stages of the Path; all are so incredibly sublime that each seems equal to the others.

[1] *prākṛtenārtha; i.e.*, for the sake of their own natural tastes, or in the course of nature.

[2] This passage, also found in MU. 5 : 37-38, is understood by V as: "Such Jivanmuktas as have reached this imperishable Turya State will never be affected by the pairs. They will automatically perform acts at the instance of their disciples or others, simply to maintain their bodies. And like a person in brown study or just awake from sleep, they will not be the doers of their present actions though performing them, and will enjoy Nirvanic bliss." A typical example of "annotated translation"!

[3] Also found in VU. 4 : 2 : 10.

But as the soul in sleep plunges deeper into the hidden strata of its own being, towards the undifferentiated Unity at its foundation, so does the 'pilgrim' into God pass even from the stage like 'deep sleep' into another even deeper, compared with the *Turya* of the Upanishads. Oblivious of everything but the One Self, the soul now eternally rejoices in the conscious experience of that Self, knowing no barrier marks off his little being from Its infinity. One alone IS; all memory of that restless petty little 'ego' is gone for ever, all misunderstanding and misperception are at an end. In perfect Knowledge, perfect Peace, the soul rests in that Eternity like a sleeping baby in its mother's arms. Still and moveless as a pictured flame which no wind can cause to gutter, the Adept's soul is unified with the Omnipresent within and without, like a vessel of water immersed in the ocean. Beyond this there can be but one little step to take, and the soul is already on its verge. Already it is beyond the limits of humanity; no longer can such a soul concern itself with earth's affairs—for evermore that 'world' already known to be a dream has faded away like a vapour dispersed in the sky, like a bottle of colourless liquid poured out into the flowing waters.

54. The Seventh Court: Merging in God

1. The wholly still condition of 'Merging',[1] equal, translucent and mild,[2] will be the

[1] This stage is called *Turya* (*lit*: the 'Fourth'), but is better described by this word, for in it nothing is but the ONE. So at this stage the Jīvanmukta can maintain no separate body; by dropping even the outer semblance of a separate existence he becomes 'Videhamukta'. It is then said to be the '*Turiyā-tita*' (*lit*: beyond the Fourth) Stage, which in no real way differs from the 'Turya'. It corresponds to the 'Spiritual Marriage' of Western Mystics.

[2] *samatā svacchatā saumyā.*

Seventh Stage, and only that is truly Freedom, the ALONE.[1] (YV. 41 : 60)[2] Having (long) been steady in the Sixth Stage, such a one will enter upon the Seventh Court; there-(in) the Seventh Stage of Union is said to be that of one freed from body,[3] (and) that is the (furthest) limit of all the Courts,[4] beyond the range of words, and still. (YV. 43 : 80-81)[5]

2. Beyond (this) Merging lies (only) the field of the one freed from body[3] (which is) considered the highest (of all). Very blessed indeed are those who have reached the Seventh Stage, (for) they have attained the Goal of Great Souls[6] who delight in the SELF, (YV. 13 : 124-125) (a goal) not to be grasped by mind or speech—the self-shining spiritual Goal. (YV. 41 : 64) Having stilled the (little) self and become GOD, full of the bliss of God, happy and translucent in form, great in the Silence—he alone is the one freed without a body.[3] (TU. 4 : 33) (Yes), beyond the

[1] *kevalā.*

[2] Found also in APU. 5 : 85.

[3] *videhamukta.*

[4] *lit*: grounds (*bhūmiṣu*).

[5] Found also in AU. 1 : 40-41.

[6] *mahātmā.*

'Merging' lies the highest state of 'Mergence', of the form of Extinction;[1] (when) fully matured, that Seventh (Court) is the final aim of living beings. (YV. 41 : 61)

And so, its long pilgrimage complete, the soul takes that last step which dissolves for ever its separate existence in the Limitless Ecstasy of the ONE. All bodies now, and not only the physical outer sheath, drop away—for bodies are to enable action on the 'outer world', and the 'outer world' no longer exists for the perfectly liberated Sage. Above all thought and feeling and all the need for activity, such a ONE is for ever merged in GOD, in the ecstatic Love of perfect Union with Him. Nay, *union* is not the word for this stage, for union is of two, and no two exist at all, only the unchanging UNITY. If from such a source actions seem to come, it is but a seeming, because in reality they arise only from the Omnipresent Source, and there remain.

This exquisite perfection is the goal of all attainment, the Freedom which no words can compass, no mind can understand nor heart perceive, the Freedom of Him alone who is eternally everywhere.

55. The Fruit of the Seven Courts

1. Now these Seven Stages are accessible only to the Wise;[2] . . . this series of seven

[1] *nirvāṇa rūpiṇī*. The word 'Nirvana' means lit: 'blown out'; it is the total and permanent extinction of all trace of a *separate* self apart from 'God'. Any distinction between the Freed, and God, is so subtle that it is fruitless to try to speak of any such existing at all. It is like the water-filled pot in the ocean, broken. Water in water, air in air. Yet it is not non-existence, it is the one Being of the Eternal Omnipresent.

[2] *dhīmatām*.

stages is (itself) that Wisdom realised by the learned, and what is to be known as Release can be thus described stage within stage.[1] . . . Indeed those who, (being) both beast and barbarian,[2] have reached these levels of Wisdom, whether with a body or discarnate, those are the Free,[3] (and) there is no doubt (of that). . . . At the end of these (stages) Freedom is steady, and therein one grieves no more. (YV. 13 : 128, 112, 128, 115)

2. (Now) hear this list of the said Stages. The Stages of Wisdom (are): *Subheccha* is counted the first, while *Vichāraṇā* is the second and the third is *Tanumānasī*; *Satvāpatti* is the fourth, and then *Asamsakti* is named; *Padārthābhāvana* is remembered sixth, and the seventh is *Turya*. (YV. 13 : 129-131)

3. Now Understanding cuts the 'Knot',[4] and in the presence of that (cutting) is Release,

[1] *bhūmikā bhūmikāntare, i.e.,* stage after stage, but the phrase suggests a gradual unfolding of what has always been latent in each soul.

[2] *mleccha*, the word usually applied to foreigners who ignore the customs of Āryavārta, the noble land of India.

[3] Time being an illusion, and the seed-producing flower as perfect as the seed itself in which all lies latent.

[4] *granthi, i.e.*, the heart's attachment to its own ideas and plans, and to what seem to be 'outer things'.

while that consists merely in ceasing to perceive the water of a desert mirage. Now those who have crossed over from illusion and valued property[1] have attained the highest level, (for) these firm stages are devoted to the gaining of the Natural State in themselves. In these Courts also are born those who are (fit) to be revered and prostrated to,[2] for they alone will be conquerors of the hostile senses; and while there is thirst even in Emperors without a kingdom, these (souls) altogether gain this Goal which is the (one) essential thing in the world. (YV. 13 : 129-131)

This is the fruit of Wisdom, the ultimate result of being free from desire and egoistic thinking. And only those who have scaled these supernal heights can truly be called 'Free', for their freedom alone is never-ending; all others have still to pay their debts to nature —the innate tax on every child of earth, its joys and sorrows, victories and vanquishments. Seven are the stages the Soul must tread on the inward, upward Path, though these stages interblend and overlap, so that for every Soul the Path seems his own and different from every other's way.

The essence of the whole is this. To understand the real nature of the world and of the self is to burst the bonds that limit us, to destroy the false idea of our separate existence, to fill the sky of thought with the

[1] *or*: wealth (*dhanāt*)

[2] *or*: worshipped.

boundless radiance of God's Light. It is the souls who tread this Path at whatever level, who deserve, and receive, the honour and admiration of the intelligent. For they seek nothing but the ONE that is no thing; even the greatest of worldly souls still long for more of earthly goods, while these naturally and easily enter on their eternal heritage of Perfection, which alone is the one Jewel to be sought through life's long storms.

CHAPTER NINE

INFINITE PERFECTION

It is the disappearance of all sense of separateness that sets the Soul free and turns him into God. Who can describe the life of one thus deified while yet living in the 'world' of men? The highest ideals of our imagination fall far short of that stupendous reality; how can the finite mind contain the Infinite, man comprehend what is Divine? Limited by nothing at all, eternally free, blissfully happy under every sort of circumstance, he wanders here and there seeing everywhere only the mirror of himself, the Self in every thing. No more has he to think of present responsibilities—God who made the world also looks after it; or of future worries and anxieties—they will see to themselves in due course; or of past regrets, lost opportunities—they are now lost in the non-existent. He lives eternally in past, present, future at once, and can act with equal ease in any phase of time.

Having no identification of himself with any one separate form, he lives in all alike, everywhere; how then can he know fear or anger, hate or passionate desire? At last, when its hour has come, the physical body men think is his will fall away—but he no more thinks of 'death' than he thinks of personal separated 'life'. Who dies, when the universe yet lives and God ever Is? Being in himself all in all—what is the world, what are even the Gods, to him? All alike are in himself, for he has merged himself in all. He has become

the God of Gods; when he calls us unawakened souls to follow in his train, because we too have attained in his attainment, being one self with him, we too can know that infinite and eternal Bliss if we but will.

56. The Victory

1. From the ceasing of actions will come the cessation of anxiety, and from that the erasing of 'impressions'. The complete erasure of 'impressions' is Release—and that is called Adeptship.[1] (AAU. 12) (Even) an unlearned Sage is possessed of the Self, (if he have) the knowledge of God and a childlike nature.[2] (APU. 4 : 38)

2 "I die not and I do not live, I neither exist nor non-exist—I am neither the one thing (nor) the other!" Being sure of this, the (enlightened) soul grieves no (more).

"Who am I? I am the Sky of Mind[3] untouched by age, desireless, (with all) ideas

[1] On the whole, this seems the best single word for *Jīvanmukta*, *lit*: the one freed while still alive (in the body ?).

The whole path is summarised in this couplet:

kriyānās'ādbhaveccintānās'o asmādvāsanākṣayaḥ |
vāsanā prakṣayo mokṣaḥ sa jīvanmuktiriṣyate ||

found also in § 22 : 4.

[2] Note the same idea as Jesus put when he said the 'Kingdom of Heaven' is composed of children.

[3] *cidākās'a*; *i.e.*, the all-pervading radiant 'Void', conscious only of Itself.

set at rest, impartible!"[1] Being sure of this, he grieves no (more).

"Forsaken by (mere) opinion, I am pure and enlightened, without ageing or dying, the calm and equal reflection (of all)!" Being sure of this, he grieves no (more).

"What is in motes of straw, the sky, the sun, in men, serpents and the immortals—you are that which you are, and only that!" Being sure of this, he grieves no (more).[2]

"The glorious Mind[3] pervades (all), on the level, above me and below!"—having come to know this, what (can there be) like a waning of that endless joy? (YV. 41 : 68-72)

The mind's freedom from bias, the results of its old thinking, grooves made by oft-repeated thought and action, comes from the ending of such egoistic thought; and that is possible only when the personal self has ceased to act from its own limited concept of a separate self. When this freedom is won, when the idea of separateness has perished, then alone can the Soul be called '*free*', and such a soul alone is really an 'Adept'. To get that freedom he need not fill the memory with the contents of books, with learned studies, with Gita or Bible verses which he can repeat by rote; it is enough if he be like a child aware only of its Father's love.

[1] *niramsʼaḥ* ; *lit* : without parts.

[2] *yatadasti tadeveṭi matvā bhūyo na sʼocati.*

[3] *cittaḥ*, the aware or perceiving mind, without thinking about what is perceived, for *manas* is at an end.

Sorrow and anxiety, born of fear and ignorance, vanish before the certainty that God alone exists; the separate self is the 'pathetic fallacy' on which this whole disparate universe is built. Such a self never did exist. To know that 'self' is nothing, while the ONE alone is all, that therefore—the logical inescapable inference—one's real being is only God, while all else is relatively imaginary, false and an illusion. That knowledge that all, all, *all*—above, below, without, within, and all around, is GOD! Such a realisation is true freedom and unending unlimited joy.

57. The Glory of the Living Adept

1. Like one (who) in days of calamity[1] is unshaken in joy and sorrow, he who neither exults nor is depressed, is thus called the 'Free'. (YV. 20 : 33)[2] He whose mental brightness[3] neither soars in joy nor draws near to setting in sorrow, but (its) state (stays) as it was—is called the Living Adept. (VU. 4 : 2 : 22) "Old age, death and calamity, kingdom and even beggary[4] are (all equally) delightful!"—only he who thus enjoys (them all) is called the Living Adept. . . . and only he who equally enjoys the pungent and the

[1] *or*: as they occur.
[2] Also found in MU. 2 : 43.
[3] *manaḥ prabhā*.
[4] *or*: penury, destitution.

sour, the salt and bitter (foods) honestly (received) or even stolen,[1] is called the Living Adept. (MU. 2 : 55, 54) He whose mood will (always) be the same in this (world), whether held adorable by saints or even (about) to be molested[2] by the wicked,[3] (AAU. 47) in whose inner view there are no likes (or) dislikes, (MU. 2 : 46) being turned away from all companionship[4] (TU. 4 : 6)—he is called the Living Adept. (MU. 2 : 46)

2. (He who knows that) Mind alone is the cause of difference and similarity in men, and (that) opinion (arises) out of error,[5] is called the Living Adept. . . . (He who knows that) the endlessly[6] revolving blissful Soul of beings is unhurt, and has no enmity for any living thing, . . . (and that as) the Sun shines upon the whole entire world, so is God established in all living beings, he is called the Living Adept. (JG. 21, 11, 3)

[1] *amṛṣṭam mṛṣṭam* : U reads this as : " unsavoury or savoury ".

[2] *or* : tormented. Cf. the story in *Bhāgavatam* XI, and the story of Bharata in the same great Purāna.

[3] *sādhubhiḥ . . . durjanaiḥ*.

[4] *or* : contact (with sense-objects).

[5] *vikalpenaiva sankalpam*.

[6] *lit* : beginninglessly.

3. He whose interest in business, though as firm as this (world) is steady as the sky when it declines, is called the Living Adept, . . . who, though moving in accordance with love and even hate or fear, (has) a heart[1] extremely clear[2] like the sky. (VU. 4 : 2 : 21, 24) He who merely acts, without looking for love (or) hate, joy (or) sorrow, good (or) evil,[3] success (or) failure, (MU. 2 : 49) (whose) action is solely (for) the body and is turned from (thoughts of) grief, folly and the like, wholly giving up (thought of) fortune and misfortune[4] (alike), he is called the Living Adept. (JG. 8) He who, having lost partiality[5] for any one direction[6] and (become) flexible like a (mere) witness, remains unexpectant[7] in (doing his) duty, . . . who, busy in all the nets of purpose,[8] is yet indifferent,[9] (throwing) as it were the whole self into the interests of others,[10] is

[1] *or* : a conscience.
[2] *or* : transparently pure.
[3] *or* : fortune and misfortune.
[4] *or* : good and bad.
[5] *or* : affection.
[6] *or* : everywhere.
[7] without a wish (*niriccho*).
[8] *or* : aims, ambitions.
[9] *or* : desireless.
[10] *or* ; pertaining to the Transcendent One.

called the Living Adept. (MU. 2 : 51, 62) Ever solitary in mind and turned from the qualities of his (own) personality,[1] tasting the sweetness of God-Wisdom, he is known as the Living Adept. (JG. 16)

4. He who in sheer playfulness has given up the (old) idea of a separate personality[2] and stands as renouncer of what is to be thought upon is called the Living Adept. (MU. 6 : 45) He whose attitude is not egoistic,[3] and (his) intelligence is unclouded equally in action and when inactive, . . . whose mind is undisturbed (when) once set at rest in the supremely pure Abode of Absolute Awareness apart from (all) mental activity, (VU. 4 : 2 : 25, 29) who knows not at all the duty everywhere pervading but understands (the real) duty (to be) God, . . . (who) by contemplation in the heart sees a light is created (in) the mind and (then) perceives "That am I, the Swan"—he is called the Living Adept.[4] (JG. 9, 17)

[1] *or*: the virtue of his own nature (*svabhāva guṇa varjitaḥ*).

[2] *or* : egoistic tendency.

[3] *yasya nāhaṃkṛto bhāve.*

[4] *hṛdi dhyānena paśyanti prakāśaṃ krīyate manaḥ |*
soham hamseti paśyanti jīvanmuktāsta eva hi ||

5. He who is awake during Deep Sleep, who has no (other) Waking, whose understanding[1] is unbiased,[2] he is called the Living Adept. . . . O Sage, when all the mind's desires have gone and one delights in Me, the All-Embracing, (then) is he called the Living Adept, . . . whose mind reacts[3] no (more) to the irrational brood of (ideas like) "This world" and "I", "He" and "This one (near me)", . . . whom the world fears not and who does not fear the world,[4] (being) freed from joy, anger and dread—he is called the Living Adept. (VU. 4 : 2 : 23, 28, 30, 26)

6. Always resting in the Fourth (State during) Waking, Dream and Sleep, (his) mind merged (in the thought) "That am I", (JG. 19) (being) everywhere the Unmanifest Self composed of a Fullness revelling in bliss,[5] . . . whose 'I' is not there at all—he is called the Living Adept. (TU. 4 : 5, 4)

Who can sing God's glory? Who can sing the glory of one who is nothing less than God, whose

[1] *or* : mental alertness.

[2] *yasya nirvāsano bodhaḥ*; *or* : desireless.

[3] *or* : re-echoes.

[4] This appears also in *Gītā*, 12 : 15.

[5] *Cf.* § 18 : 1.

common 2% of the Divine has expanded into 100%? Who can sing the glory of the Adept, the Master of Life, the Liberated One?

Free from every fear and preference, calm and infinitely blessed in every circumstance, equally at peace when 'happy' and 'in pain'—such is he who, being on the higher stages of the Path, yet manifests on earth to guide and to inspire his younger brothers.

He who sees only God in everything, who acts playfully in the 'world' and, while seemingly concerned with those activities, is yet wholly free from all anxiety and interest in them, indifferent to their results, unconcerned about success or failure, shame or honour—he who merely acts as instrument of the eternal Law may rightly be revered as the supreme Guru by all lesser souls.

Freed from the old delusion of separateness and of the reality of sense-perceived things, set free from every self-centred thought into the boundless wisdom of quiet Understanding beyond the mind, who knows that God alone is man's sole concern and perceives His Light shining in the very centre of his own being—such a one may be called a Master of the Wisdom, and no one else.

Beyond the mind's states, combining them in the steady awareness of the Mind-free ONE, in whom is no shadow of difference at all, simple, omnipresent, One and Unique, seeing HIM alone in every time and place —how could such a one taste of fear or enmity? He alone is the real Master. In him there is no consciousness of a separate 'I' any more; all around is the Everlasting, full, complete, and all-pervading.

58. Omnipresent Being

1. Having given up the conviction that all is this and is not that, he stands; that one

(who thinks, "Being) only the True Bliss-Awareness, I am God and not so-and-so,"[1] does not at all, at any place or any time, (even) touch the Self.[2] Only (when he) remains silent, (comes) silently, silently, and not a little (at a time) the Truth,[3] the Highest Self beyond (all) qualities, the All-Self and (very) Source of Being. (TU. 4 : 39-41)

2. In him there is no sort of difference of Time, difference of Substance,[4] difference of Place, difference of himself—or rather, there is no 'I', 'you' or 'it', 'this thing', 'he' (or) 'this one' at all. The self of timeless Time, the self of Void, the self of Subtle Form, the Cosmic self devoid of universe, the Divine self, the self without gods, the knowable self unknowable, everywhere the (one) self without inertness, the inner self of all, the self devoid of all

[1] *sarvamastīti nāstīti niścayam tyajya tiṣṭhati* |
aham brahmāsmi nāsmīti saccidānanda mātrakaḥ ||

[2] He who sees *any* difference between himself and another does not really know himself at all; one with God who is *all*, how can one be dissociated even from the most repulsive, or the most glorious creature?

[3] *or*: whatever is the Truth.

[4] *vastubhedam*.

thoughts[1]—" I am Awareness only ! ", always thus ! (TU. 4 : 41-44)

Such a Master can no longer say 'That' and 'This', or 'You' and 'I', for all is only God, and he knows he too is God and nothing else. No intellectual concept is this, for intellectuality is the grossest ignorance, the darkness of an abysmal night; it is the bright and living experience of rapture in a leaping life of gladness and of power. Any feeling that he is God and *not* something else, for instance, the sinful man or fallen woman, the worm crawling in its filth—what used to be called 'not-self'—will now only stand between him and that perfection of realized Truth. There is no 'not-self'; all alike and equally, the star and tree, the water, fish and worm, the saint and foulest criminal, all, all is but the very self alone, the SELF nameless whom we name GOD—though He must ever be beyond all qualities the mind conceives or names.

All differences, of whatsoever kind, vanish from the Liberated Soul; nothing *is* any more but He, in all, in whom all is—still, changeless, Self-immersed, pure and infinite.

59. Playing in the World of Men

1. He neither looks to the future, nor lingers in the present, nor recalls the past; he merely does all (as it comes). The mind (is) always unattached to the succession of other people, acting with devotion to the devotee[2]

[1] *sankalpa.*

[2] *bhakte bhakti samācāraḥ.*

and as a confirmed rogue with rogues,[1] (behaving as) a child to children and an old man to the aged, a hero among the brave, a youth to (those of) youthful manners, sympathetic with the sorrowing. (His) intelligence soaring into the bliss of (supreme) Intelligence, glorified by tender good deeds,[2] the Illumined One is gracious and sweet to the one lying on a pauper's deathbed.[3] The Living Adept is not amazed[4] even if the sunlight (turns) cold, even if the lunar orb is fiercely hot,[5] or flames stream out downwards. (YV. 27 : 62-66)

2. While the King of Union[6] is free (to take) any form he will, and is (ever) unaging and undying, he playfully frolics about anywhere he likes in the three worlds.[7] (YSU. 1 : 43) Whether clothed or even stark naked, clad in a skin[8] or wearing only mental garments;[9] whether like a very madman, or

[1] *or*: the crafty; the word need not have a very bad significance.
[2] *or*: the glory (being in) lovely virtues.
[3] *lit*: lying down to die of poverty.
[4] *or*: unshaken, not disconcerted.
[5] *or*: "the moon turns black" (*sutapte pindu*), as V has it.
[6] *yogindraḥ*.
[7] *krīḍate triṣu lokeṣu līlayā yatra kutracit*.
[8] *or*: bark (of trees).
[9] *or*: dwelling in a robe of (pure) mind; *i.e.*, naked.

like a child, or even like a ghost,[1] he wanders over the earth. . . . Now a dunce, and now a very scholar, in (some) places a mighty King (or) a gentle tramp, sometimes behaving as a loathsome python,[2] now honoured, and now where quite unknown insulted—thus the Illumined One roams, happy in perpetual and utmost bliss! (VC. 540, 542) Who can hold back from that path which he chooses the Great Soul by whom this whole world is thus known (to be) the Self? (AVG. 4 : 4)

Seeing only the One beloved Self in all alike, the Liberated Soul moves here and there, unaware of place or time, playfully acting in a freedom like the wind's, no longer bound by past habits or circumstances. His very curse becomes an eagerly sought blessing, because it brings the worldly soul into contact with Perfection; his embrace is for the lucky child a momentary union with the All; to their very victims his tricks and naughtiness endear the Beloved shown by his acts; his example in devotion, heroism, sympathy inspires the 'world'. Being like St. Paul "all things to all men", he wins many to the Truth; undisturbed even by the ruin of a world and the annihilation of millions in dreadful wars, he steadies all who see him, so that they neither fear nor suffer any more.

[1] *unmattavadvāpicā bālavadvā piśācavadvāpi.* It is hard for the ordinary man to recognise the Sage if he wishes to avoid men's worship by assuming such disguises!

[2] *i.e.*, staying in one place and eating whatever chances to come to its mouth, clean or foul.

Careless of human prejudices, public opinion and conventionalities, he moves about as he will, assuming any form, indifferent to honour or disdain, and ever-blissful in that freedom of total unconcern. Knowing all as God, how can he be bound by the chains the ignorant wear, or guided in the ways of darkness by the blind ?

60. Ever Calm and Blissful

1. The very form of desirelessness among desires, the Sage moves about in solitude, ever satisfied with his own self alone, himself (being) stayed in the Universal Self.[1] (VC. 541) Such a person comes to be a Sage, (whether) engaged in business or retired, or if you like becomes a householder, (whether) embodied or discarnate. (YV. 41 : 67)

2. An effortless rejection of enjoyments not yet come, and a full experiencing of things present—this is the sign of the (truly) learned.[2] . . . They neither give up nor desire (any) business arising out of the world. Wise men really delight in everything of both kinds ;[3]

[1] R's version is here far too free to be followed.

[2] This comes very close to Krishnamurti's old picture of 'Life in Freedom' as an intense awareness, living out everything to the utmost.

[3] I am not quite sure of the reading here ; it seems corrupt.

they do not destroy what has been begun, (and) on the other hand they rejoice over what is left on the way (to completion, being) always unmoved within (by thoughts and) engrossed with a moonlike beauty. Even in disaster they do not lose as it were the coolness of the moon,[1] (while) in appearance they shine with the beauty of qualities like friendship. (Their) saintly deeds are ever impartial, elegant and gracious; (their) plans are fulfilled like the ocean that keeps (its) bounds.[2] So the (very) glance of these (Saints defeats) the worst calamity. (YV. 18 : 42-45)[3]

3. The Living Adept, whose masses of impressions cannot cause rebirth, dwells in the Reality, continuing like a revolving (potter's) wheel. (YV. 28 : 61) Remaining down here for some while, nevermore at all does he return to a body and its swarm of accompaniments. So long indeed, as past karma[4] is (to be) enjoyed he lives in a strange[5] way,

[1] *āpadyāpi na muncanti s'as'inaḥ s'ītatāmiva,*

[2] V renders this : "Like the ocean they will never exceed their bounds."

[3] Of this paragraph V's rendering is a mere sketchy outline, with little resemblance to the original.

[4] *prārabdha*, that amount of 'karma' which is to be worked out in the present body.

[5] *or* : peculiar (to each Sage).

with an intellect unattached and free from the pairs of opposites,[1] ever pure, (with its) 'my-ness' and (its) sense of an 'I' dissolved, always contented, (being) steady in the Natural State of God-Bliss,[2] and extremely moveless on the vanishing of all delusion. (SS. 96)

Alone with God, in God, the Adept is unmoved even in the stormy environment of worldly people; with or without a body, engaged in business or withdrawn into forest solitudes, he is ever free from all desire and saturated with causeless bliss.

Indifferent to hope and enjoyment, caring nothing for what surrounds him as he moves; regretting nothing in the past, seeking nothing from the future, he is eternally absorbed in the 'Everlasting Now' beyond all time and space. Beauty, the beauty of pure spirit, ever enfolds him with its radiance because love impersonal is his inmost instinct, breathes out incessantly in all he thinks and says and does, nay, in his very silence and inaction. So his presence in the world is a potent benediction; whether he teaches or works or prays, silent and withdrawn or furiously active, his very being there spreads a mighty calm through all creation.

So long as the forces which brought this Soul originally to birth endure, until the 'clock' runs down, so long as the 'wheels' turn round, he seems to live among men like a man, while he is really nothing but a shadow of the Infinite and Discarnate Self. Never more can he assume an outer body, for all bodies are for the fulfilment of desire—and where is desire for him who has attained the Whole and is merged in God? Until

[1] *nirdvandvaḥ*.

[2] *or*: identical in nature with infinite bliss (*brahmānanda svarūpaḥ sthiram*).

the initial forces are spent the body moves on its way, mysteriously urged by the impulse of long-dead thoughts, as the light from a distant star follows its path to earth even when the star itself has perished from existence. Who can understand his acts? Who can dare judge his words? Without even the root of a personality, he acts and speaks impersonally like the Divine Bliss, and at the same time rests in the Actionless.

61. He is Lord of Destiny

1. (The effect of) that action which belongs to past births is (commonly) known as 'Destiny',[1] but as a man's past lives do not exist there is no such thing. As the dream-body is illusory, so also in fact is this physical body; where is the birth of an illusion, and whence then the taking place of (a man's) birth?[2] (A. 92-93)[3]

[1] *i.e.*, *prārabdha*. It has always been disputed whether an Adept is subject to the effects of past actions, especially when great saints like Sri Ramakrishna and Bh. Ramana are observed to suffer intensely with cancer. But Scripture is quite clear that full surrender to God, the Eternal Self of all, destroys *every* human limitation and sets man free from *every* sin, Cf. *Gītā* 18 : 66, GN. 28 : 3, etc. etc. Some have thought such suffering to be vicariously borne on behalf of their disciples—a possibility, for we are in no way separate from one another and the human race is a vast unity.

[2] These two important and explicit *ślokas* read :
karma janmāntarīyaṃ yatprārabhamiti kīrtitam
tattu janmāntarābhāvātpuṃso naivāsti karhicit
svapnadeho yathā adhyastathaivāyam hi dehakaḥ
adhyastasya kuto janma janmabhāve hi tatkutaḥ.

[3] This paragraph surely demolishes the bogey tolerated by § 38 : 1.

2. The world turns to nothing[1] when the Final Authority in known ;[2] how then can the destiny of a body (which is part) of (that) world go on ? . . . Because a knowledge of the Real has dawned, not even Destiny is left standing now, for the body, etc. are (all) unreal just like a dream on awakening. (A. 96-97, 91) On seeing (both) the High and the Low[3] in him(self) a man's actions (and their results) fade away. (Mun.U. 2 : 2 : 8)

3. Destiny prevails while (the idea that) the body is the self is strong ; when the feeling (that) the body is the self is no longer held, (the existence of) Destiny may be rejected. . . . By means of the clear knowledge "I am God", the store (of karmas) gathered during hundreds of crores of ages vanishes away like the (results of a) dream-action by means of waking up. (VC. 460, 447) By this means[4] alone crores of accumulated actions (done) down here in the endless[5] (cycles of)

[1] *lit* : goes to emptiness (*śūnyatām gataḥ*).

[2] *adhiṣṭāne jñāte* ; *or* : when the Ultimate Reality is realized.

[3] *parāvare*.

[4] *i.e.*, the practice of Ecstasy.

[5] *lit* : beginningless.

worldly life perish away;[1] that is why through skilful practice (of knowledge and union) lakhs of streams of nectar are always raining down.[2] (PU. 3 : 5)

What is called 'destiny' is really only the result on the individual of his actions in the past lives. But we have learned that in reality the Soul is never incarnated at all, its body and actions are but illusory deceits, it was never caught in matter—only the 'false' ego-mind is ever bound. So how can a non-existent 'individual self' act, or incur the results of actions? Reincarnation and karma are mere ideas, rising from the ignorant misconception of the self's real nature; it neither evolves, nor errs, nor suffers in any way. To speak of 'destiny', then, the result of such non-existent actions, is to speak of the 'horns of a hare', the 'child of a barren woman'—to use hackneyed expressions of Sanskrit literature. The physical body is exactly as 'real' as the body worn by the 'personality' in dream; how can such a body ever be born or die?

When God is known, the whole 'world' disappears from the consciousness of the self, which is then wholly merged in the delicious beauty of the ONE; in such a state, how can the destiny of a body, itself a part of that vanished 'world', continue? Where then is what the books call '*prārabdha*'? It is only a seeming that the physical body once used by the struggling 'little self' goes its way until the normal time for its death arrives; in reality that body never was, nor shall be. Where then its actions, or their results?

Such things go on only so long as the self is identified with the 'body' and its egoic desires. Once

[1] *vilayam yānti.*

[2] *or*: thousands (*sahasraś'aḥ sadā amṛtadhārā varṣati*); a *crore* is ten millions, while a *lakh* is a hundred thousand.

it is dissociated from these, destiny, karma and the like have no more meaning for it at all. In a flash the accumulated karma of all three kinds vanishes away once God is seen—which is cognate with the total surrender to Him implied by really 'taking His Name' even once, in other philosophies. Is the waking self subject to the effects of dream-action? Is his hunger satisfied by dream food? If in dream he murders a man, will any court try him for the deed? So too the acts of the Illumined in the physical body are unreal and cannot for a moment bind him or affect his future.

And here we have to enter a warning that it is in just such truths as this the danger of indiscriminate teaching of the Advaita lies (cf. § 28 : 1). Freedom from karma belongs to the Illumined, to the liberated soul, and *not* to the personality which identifies itself with the lower desires and ideas. To imagine it does, is to destroy the moral basis of life and to make impossible the gaining of those qualifications which the Path requires (cf. §§ 22-24, 34).

62. Life as the Adept Sees It

1. (In) a mood (as) quiet as in sleep, the thoughts[1] not moving, **the Adept** is always awake by means of that (divine) consciousness;[2] the one who is ever immersed in delight as if (he were) courted by the wise—down here he is defined as the 'Free'. (YV. 20 : 36)

2. Having (once) gained (true) knowledge of God, even while he always sees the whole

[1] *vṛtti*, Patanjali's 'mental modifications'.
[2] *tena cetasā.*

supposed world, he (really) sees nothing at all apart from[1] himself.[2] (VU. 2 : 27-28) He by whom this universe is seen may indeed say it does not (really) exist, but what can the unaffected[3] say?[4] Even while seeing (it) he does not see (anything). (AVG. 18 : 15) Even while perceiving the world in the form of a soul and so on, the knower of the Highest Self does not (really) see that mental form, he sees only God, the Reality (behind).[5] (PBU. 2 : 24-25)

3. The (personal) self embraces the SELF and suddenly knows nothing at all within (or) without, just like a lover passionately embracing the beloved on returning home from a foreign land. There (both) worldly business and songs about virtue and vice[6] disappear;

[1] *or:* except.

[2] *or: sadā naiva paśyati svātmanaḥ pṛthak.*

[3] *or:* desireless, unbiased. One totally unconcerned with the 'world', as he knows it is only a mental projection, has no need to *say* it does not exist. He remains immersed in blissful silence. The word here is *nirvāsanaḥ.*

[4] *lit:* make (*kurotu*).

[5] *na tatpaśyati cidrūpam brahmavastveva paśyati.*

[6] *lit:* supplemental hymns relating to virtue and sin (*anubandhaḥ*), *or:* "all worldly activity which is the result of merit and sin", as another translator has it.

he remembers nothing of it at all—the smooth and the rough,[1] sorrow, confusion and fear. (SS. 69) Dropping all the fruits of action, ever contented and relying on no one,[2] he is affected[3] neither by virtue nor by sin, by neither one of the two. (YV. 41 : 99)

4. Unconcerned (even when) unpraised, worshipful (yet) without worship,[4] both joined (to others) and unconnected (with them), **the Adept's** mode of life adheres to the universal pattern[5] (outwardly); (so) the world does not fear him, nor does he fear the world.[6] He gives up love and hate and fear, and is altogether united to bliss . . . whether he drops the body at a (holy) place of pilgrimage or in a (vile) dog-eater's house.[7] (YV. 41 : 102-105)

5. A mind set free from outer things, being fixed through a ceaseless making (of itself into) God[8] makes use of what is to be used

[1] *or* : ups and downs.

[2] *i.e.*, alone.

[3] *or* : tainted, stained.

[4] *i.e.*, indifferent to, turned away from (*pūjya pūjā vivarjitaḥ*).

[5] *sarvācāra*.

[6] *Cf.* § 57 : 5 and Gita 12 : 15.

[7] *Cf.* § 63 : 1. Ordinary folk attach great importance to a death at some place of pilgrimage like Banaras.

[8] *brahmakāratayā*.

(only) at the request of others, like a sleeper (or) like a child, now and then seeing this world like the world seen in a dream. If such a mind be obtained, (then) blessed is the enjoyer of an endless fruit of merit, he is to be honoured on the earth! . . . The one who is marked out by no signs and unattached to outer things, freed from all sense of an 'I', he rests upon the carriage of this body[1] and like a child enjoys all the objects brought near at the wish of others. (VC. 425, 539) Forgetting hunger and bodily fatigue,[2] a child plays with toys; so too does the Realized delight, being happy without the (idea of) 'Mine' and without the (sense of) an 'I'. (At. U. 10-11)

6. Having discarded (both) the feeling of 'I' and the feeling of 'Not-I', both being and non-being,[3] that which is steady and unattached, not shallow,[4] that is called the Fourth (State). . . . When the mind has

[1] *i.e.* without self-identification with it (*vimānamalamba s'arīram etad*).

[2] *or*: physical pain (*dehavyathām tyaktvā*); but a child does not forget its physical *pains* so easily!

[3] *or*: true and false (*sadasatī tathā*).

[4] *lit*: transparent.

given up the (last) speck of egoism and through equal vision becomes bodiless, the Fourth State rises up to approach and meet (it). (YV. 42 : 29, 33) Where (then) is darkness, where light, failure ? Nothing (of these) at all (exists) for the changeless Hero who is ever fearless ! (AVG. 18 : 78) Even when a pauper (he is) always contented, even (when) friendless,[1] very powerful, ever satisfied though eating nothing, though without an equal (he sees) with equal vision ![2] (VC. 543)

7. Like the memory of things een in a dream, so (are the routine acts) of the Sage like eating and excreting. (VC. 457) As the thought[3] of the movements of the feet of a traveller intent on going to a (far) country vanishes (from his mind), so does (the Adept forget) the movements in his own activity. (YV. 43 : 107) Even while acting he is not the doer, nor (is he) the experiencer when enjoying the results (of action); (he is) incarnate yet not embodied, omnipresent though (in appearance) limited (to a body). (VC. 544)

[1] *or*: helpless.

[2] *asamaḥ samadarsanaḥ.*

[3] *sankalpa.*

8. Or else, having given up even that (subtle) fragment of awareness,[1] the mass of (his) mind being stilled, the (Adept's) soul stands tranquil, flaming like a jewel in the Self. That state of souls where the light of intelligence is wickless and (so) gone out, that quiet understanding only is (what is) called 'Sleep-Waking'. (APU. 2 : 11-12)

9. Now to the full knower of the Self, not even the least desire occurs; he who could have a desire at all could easily secure some psychic power.[2] But on the stilling of the net[3] of all desires, how can he who indeed is about to gain the Self obtain (Him) by (means of) a mind drowned in desires for (such futilities as) a psychic power?[2] (YV. 28 : 8-9)

How can we, darkened by ignorance, picture the life of him who is irradiate with light infinite? Ever drowned in boundless bliss, inundated with peace, the Master is free from all limitation, calm and happy as though in the deepest sleep. Seeing all this world and its countless beauties, its endless stream of living beings —he yet sees only God, and knows that all is but a reflection of himself who is one with God. "All is God!" his heart cries in rapture, though words may

[1] *caityāṃs'a.*

[2] *siddhi.*

[3] *or:* snare, meshes.

not rise to his lips in that ecstatic understanding of the Whole. The ignorant may doubt of the One Self, for they see so many forms of endless variation; but the enlightened one both sees and does not see life's variety —for to his vision there is only ONE, the Endless Self. To him indeed All is God!

With what joy the long-separated 'Two' embrace into perfect Unity again! All memories of that 'divorce', all thought of the ages of separation and loneliness, vanish in a flash as the Soul rushes into the 'arms' of its perfect Fullness! Who now can think of joy or sorrow, error, sin or fear? In the ecstasy of Oneness where is there room for any other thought or feeling? Where the desire of Heaven or Liberation in the Soul that sees the Lord and is for evermore wrapped in His embrace? Where are its virtues, where its sins? All are *nothing*, for God alone is all! Who is there to forgive, what can be forgiven or punished now? Nothing exists but the Infinite Eternal One.

For a time such a glorified Soul may live on among men, may later even resume a body as a sort of 'Avatār' to play on earth and do an allotted task; but freed from joy and sorrow, love and hate for any earthly thing, how can the ordinary man understand or even perceive his real nature? Indifferent to convention, careless of every desire and custom, he lives free or dies free at God's will, and is ever in life and death merged in the Solitary Bliss.

The Adept while on the earth uses sense-objects without attachment, simply, and as those around may suggest; when he looks on the 'outer world' at all, he sees only a dreamlike reflection of the One Self everywhere, and plays among the things of sense like a child with toys—no slightest idea of personal desire or repulsion darkening his happiness. For ever that old tormenting sense of 'I' has gone—and with it the whole idea of the 'Not-I', which was so often a source

of fear and anger, love and longing. Calm, detached alike from mind and body, resting ever in the inmost Self, this Soul knows nothing else beyond.

Such a Soul may, so long as the body lasts, continue its routine acts, but he does them as in a dream, never for a moment attached to them or believing in their significance, but watching them as the audience watch a play upon a stage. One always thinking eagerly of his goal as he journeys to some holy place has his mind always set on that destination ; can he look to the step each foot must take upon the way? So does the Illumined act without attention, steady in the Inner Self.

Then at last he drops even that conscious awareness of himself as merged in God, for there is no more 'himself' to be merged, there is only God the ONE. In that perfect PEACE all separateness is lost. Can we look in such a Soul for the trivial childishness of psychic powers? Can we ask him for some miracle to prove his greatness? Can we for a moment think of him as caring in the least degree for bodily health or longevity? What to him the so-much advertised benefits of yogic postures and breath-control? Indifferent to both 'life' and 'death', how can we ask him to practise methods to prolong an incarnation which he knows entirely unreal, non-existent? Of course, if he *could* turn his mind to such a stupidity as the powers sketched in Patanjali's great *Sutras*, he could at once attain them all; but how could one who filled his mind with such futilities attain the SELF? His very choice of God as the only Aim has long ago rejected such things as beneath the notice of the wise.

63. He Passes Away

1. Whether at a (holy) place of pilgrimage or in the house of the most disgusting

(outcaste),[1] or wherever at all he dies, the Yogi[7] will not see a womb again, he will merge in God. (AG. 2 : 29) As there is no cremation of the (already) cremated[2] (or) cooking of the (already) cooked, (so there must be) neither funeral nor rites for the body (already) consumed by the fire of wisdom.[3] . . . Wherever the Knower dies, or by whatsoever death, there, there he vanishes like the omnipresent sky! (PU. 4 : 10, 19)

2. Dying in any mood whatsoever, in any place at all,[4] Yogis will there (and then) be merged (in God) like the pot of air[5] in the air[6] (around). (AG. 1 : 68) As on breaking a pot the air[5] of the pot is merged into the air (around), so on the ending of the body the Yogi[7] (is merged) in the very form of the Highest Self. (AG. 2 : 25) Where is this soul (then)? As sea-salt is dissolved in the water,

[1] *or*: an untouchable's house (*antyajagehe*).

[2] *lit*: burning . . . burned.

[3] *jñānāgni dagdha dehasya na ca s'rāddham na ca kriyā*, It is the rule in India to bury sannyāsis and saints, not to cremate their bodies.

[4] *yena kenāpi bhāvena*.

[5] *lit*: space.

[6] *lit*: sky.

[7] In this section the word Yogi is equivalent with 'Adept'; there is no question now of his having to return as in § 50 : 2.

(so is there) only the endless Self. That water is called saline which comes from within the ocean; it is afterwards evaporated, and when a lump (of the salt) is thrown into that (water again) it dissolves and loses its name and form. Just so also does the Sage vanish away into the Highest Self. (SS. 46-47)

Unnoticed by the Illumined Soul himself, the day will come when the body known and loved or ignored by men, worshipped perchance by devotees, will fall away and break the last seeming link with earthly things. The Master drops it calmly, indifferent to all considerations of place or time; for him there is no need of death at Banaras or any other holy shrine; he has no fear lest foul surroundings awaken some last thought in the dying mind which will lead to rebirth in the world of men. He neither cares for such a possibility, nor does it exist for him; when mind and ego, with all their desires and limitations, have vanished long ago how can rebirth occur which is caused by unfulfilled desire and the need to follow limiting thoughts to their last conclusion? Nor does he need the 'consolations of religion' in his last hour or after death; that body may be consumed by dogs or vultures, thrown on the dungheap, buried for the worms—it matters not at all; it is but a shadow lost in the light of a fully risen sun. The rites of formal cremation are not for him, for the consuming of desire thus typified has already been performed by him in real fact. He is already gone, free, blended with the unconfined air! What have priests and relatives to do for him? Religion itself has fallen off, an unneeded umbilical cord for the newborn babe!

He has no need to turn his mind to God at the last moment; prayer has for him no meaning now.

Whenever and in whatever mood that dropping of the body may occur, it can only set him wholly free to merge yet deeper in God, in whom he is already drowned. Where then is the soul for whom to pray? It has become a part of the vast Whole, incarnate in the universe, and yet like God beyond all incarnation.

64. The Song of the Deified[1]

1. (I am) the well-loved friend of all, and
 that
Is how I (now can) live in (endless) joy.
 (YV. 29 : 244)
When water into water has been thrown,
The difference of waters is removed;
Just so does Matter altogether seem
To me the same as Spirit (at this time).
 (AG. 1 : 50)
All that which (once) was seen (as though)
 impure
Within the painful night of worldly life,
I now have found (mere) roaming in
 the void

[1] In rendering this Song in blank verse, I do not mean to suggest that the other portions used in the 'Gospel' are unworthy of such treatment; it is rather that didactic poetry has no charm in the Englishman's mind nowadays. I have maintained the same strict accuracy of translation aimed at throughout the book, though bracketed words may sometimes here owe their place rather to the demands of metre!

Delusion filled by (this) vain body ('s lie).[1]
(MU. 6 : 22)

2. I long no (more) for what has not been won,
Nor do I (now) refuse what has been gained;
I stand (securely) stayed in the pure Self;
What should be mine, let that come (now) to me![2] (XV. 19 : 62)

I have no mental karma[3] good or bad,
I have no body-karma fair or ill,
I have no verbal karma fair or foul;
I am the pure immortal Wisdom (far)
Beyond the (range of) senses (and the 'I').
(AG. 1 : 8)

I never worry (now) about the past,
Nor (harbour cares about) what is to come;
With steady gaze upon the here and now
I stand (serene, relying) on my Self! (YV. 29 : 236)

3. I neither act, nor suffer the results
Of actions past or future, present too;

[1] *samsāra rātri duhkhapne s'ūnye dehemaye bhrame |*
sarvamevā-pavitram taddṛṣṭam samsmṛti vibhramam ||

[2] *yanmamāstu tadastu me.*

[3] *or* : action.

This is my changeless[1] certitude (of mind).
(AG. 1 : 71)
(Then) knowing well that nothing can be
done
In (very) deed I do the work to hand,
And then am happy (as I was before).
(AVG. 13 : 3)
(Though) actionless, I ceaselessly perform
The highest action ; unattached and (yet)
(All) unconcerned, (I relish) all the best
Enjoyment ; bodiless and (quite) without
A body, (yet I have) unending (joy)
(And) satisfaction. Wisdom's nectar I,
The same throughout, like the (all-present)
sky ![2] (AG. 3 : 26)
4. I am not anyone, nor do I deeds
(Of) any (kind), not even this (I seem)
(To do). (YV. 10 : 25) I neither act (my-
self) nor cause
(That others) act ; I do not reap (the fruits)
(Of) acts, nor make (another) suffer them ;
I am no seer, nor do I even cause
That (other souls) should see ; I am

[1] *or* : firm, unalterable.

[2] *or* : Wisdom Immortal (*ñānāmṛtam samarasam gaganopamoaham*).

That Self self-shining and invisible.[1]
(VC. 507)
I nothing see down here, nor hear (nor) know;
I am in Self alone, enformed as Bliss
Eternal and without discerning marks![2]
(VC. 485)
And this (you see) is the result (for me):
I gain this beauty unattainable! (YV. 29 : 237)

5. I am not born, nor shall I ever die;
I have no karmas (either) good or ill.[3]
God very pure, devoid of qualities,
How could I (then) be (either) bound or freed? (AG. 1 : 58)
Where is the past, the future where, or where
The (living) present? Where is Space, where too
Eternity,[4] for me (who ever) stand
In my own glory? Where is self, and (that)
(Which is) not self? Where good, where evil too?

[1] *soayam svayam jyotiranidṛgātmā.*
[2] R reads: "distinct from everything else".
[3] *na jāto aham mṛto vāpi na me karma s'ubhās'ubham.*
[4] *or*: where anything else?

Where thought and where non-thought[1] for me (who rest)
Established in the glory (that is) mine? (AVG. 19 : 3-4)

6. I am the Formless Self, pervading all
By its own (very) nature;[2] (AG. 1 : 4) (yea,) in all
That are I am, or else all are in me! (AG. 6 : 4)
In me, the boundless Sea of Happiness,
(Tall) waves of universes often[3] rise
And sink (beneath) the whirling hurricanes
Of Maya; (VC. 496) (yea,) in me, the limitless
And mighty Deep, the universe's raft
Drifts here and there, (blown) by the wind of Mind;
And yet my patience (dwells) all undisturbed![4]
In me, the vast infinite Ocean, let
World-waves arise and of themselves subside
(Again), for me where is the gain or loss?[5]

[1] *or* : care . . . absence of care.
[2] *svabhāvataḥ*,
[3] *bahudhā* : *or* : frequently, time and again.
[4] *or*: it does not affect me (*asahiṣṇutā*).
[5] *na me vṛddhirna ca kṣatiḥ*.

On me, the infinitely vast (expanse)
(Of) Ocean, only fancy moulds the worlds!
Thus I (myself) remain this (Ocean vast),
Extremely peaceful and without a form!
(AVG. 7 : 1-3)

7. How shall I name (that) universal Form
Unseconded,[1] and on the other hand
How can I call it dual?[2] Equally,
How shall I call the (timeless) universe
Eternal, (even) transient? I am
Immortal Wisdom, everywhere the same,
(Pervading all) like the (unbounded) sky!
(AG. 3 : 5)

Who am I (then)? The Self of all, the All
Am I, (and yet) I am beyond the All!
The One unequalled, absolute, (immense),
And endless Understanding—(such) am I;
I am the (partless) undivided[3] Bliss!
(VC. 516)

I am no soul, (for) I am God (Himself);[4]
Nought else but Truth alone indeed am I![5]
(TU. 6 : 33, 59)

[1] *advaitarūpamakhilam hi katham vadāmi?*
[2] *or*: manifold (*dvaita*).
[3] *or*: indivisible.
[4] *brahmaivāham na jivo aham.*
[5] *or*: Being (*sanmātramahameva hi*).

8. I am (all) Knowledge, and the Known
am I,
The Knower I, the Means to Knowledge
too;
Composed without a Knower, Know-
ledge, or
The Known—there is (in all) but I
alone . . .
I am the ONE, no difference can rise
In me like 'this' or 'that'; . . . and it
is I
Who manifest the ONENESS.[1] . . .
Free am I
From stainful Ego, I am pure from taint
Of sin and virtue; . . . I am full of
Right
And Wrong, (yet) free from bonds of such
(a thought)
As 'Right and Wrong'. . . . I never have
been bound;
So too I never have been freed from bonds.
I never needed teaching, nor am I
That which is taught, nor (even) teacher I.
I am devotion, I the hymn (of praise);[2]

[1] *aikyavabhāsako aham.*
[2] *or*: worship (*bhajanamaham*).

Freedom am I, the Way to Freedom too!
(SN. 126, 112-113, 118, 129. 133-134)

9. I cannot be attained, though with the aid
Of many hundred Scriptures, by those minds
That have no calmness and no self-control; . . .
I can be won upon the road of peace.[1] . . . I am
The maker of (sweet) bliss for (this whole) world,
Alone am I the dawn of (all) the worlds . . .
I do not bow to Gods, (for) one beyond
The Gods (can) never serve a God, . . . (and) I
Am Lord of Lords! . . . I am the ONE that dwells
Within the centre of the hearts of all;
I am the full(ness of) supernal bliss,
I am the uttermost beatitude,[2]
I have become the Infinite (Supreme);
(SN. 140, 123-124, 109, 153, 108, 120, 105)

[1] *s'antimārga gamyoaham.*
[2] *or* : I am the Supreme Self (*paramas'ivoaham*).

10. O all is only GOD, there is none else;
And That am I, (yea,) that (Divine) am I!
O That alone am I, (yea,) only That;
I am Eternal GOD alone, (none else)![1]
(TU. 6 : 31)

No words can voice the glory the Adept has gained; yet to give us 'prisoners of flesh' a vague picture of his realisation he has sung this song of triumphant ecstasy. To know there is but the ONE, that we are that ONE, that eternity and infinity are mere *words* before the wonder of that BEING now revealed at the centre of the Self—this is the ADVAITA, this is KAIVALYĀ-NANDA this true JNĀNA (Gnosis). Beyond this, what could there be? In it is involved the whole marvel of the Many, the mystery of Creation and its aim, the beauty of the Godhead; in it is the whole glory of transcendence, the perfection of perfection uniting all conceivables. In it lies the fruition of the countless ages of wandering through the shadows, in it the blessedness of infinite light and wisdom and goodness, in it the secret of immortal love innate in all.

65. Last Words of the Realized

1. Giving up the following of the world's (opinion), giving up the following of body (-comfort), giving up the following of books,[2]

[1] This fine closing *s'loka* reads:

brahmaiva sarvam nānyo asti tadaham tadaham tathā |
tadevāham tadevāham brahmaivāham sanātanam ||

[2] Abandon the three 'tendencies' listed in § 36. U reads here: "obeying the body's dictates"; it is giving the body more importance than a tool can rightly claim.

remove the false idea of your (separate) self.[1] (AU. 1 : 40) Outwardly feigning ardour[2] (while) without interest[2] in the heart, outside a doer[3] but a non-doer within, wander with pure mind in the world! (MU. 6 : 68) Hence the Knower of the Real (may be) absorbed in worldly duties, ignoring the loss of what is destroyed and welcoming the arrival of what is received. (YV. 17 : 102) Noble, and (walking) tactfully in accordance with old customs, wholly give up inner attachment (while still) outwardly like a man of the world:[4] (MU. 6 : 70) (while) renouncing all in the heart, act outwardly as (the need) comes. (APU. 5 : 116)

2. Gaze only on the Self, yourself teach the self, yourself enjoy your own self, be steadily fixed upon yourself![5] Yourself contented in the Self, yourself guide your own self; please the Self alone and be possessed of bodiless Release![6] (TU. 4 : 80-81) Having

[1] *lokānuvartanam tyaktvā tyaktvā dehānuvartanam |*
śāstrānuvartanam tyaktvā svādhyāsāpanayam kuru ||

[2] *or*: agitation (*samrambha*).

[3] U reads here: "ostensibly a man of action".

[4] *antaḥ sanga parityāgi bahiḥ samsāravāniva.*

[5] Cf. this passage with *Gītā* 2 : 55, 6 : 5-6, 20.

[6] *vaidehimuktiko bhava.*

known both the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self,[1] be happy without egoism and free from the sense of "(That is) mine!" (AVG. 15 : 6)

3. Thereby have you clearly come to know what is to be known by Great Souls, detached even from enjoyments and indifferent to things visible down here. With full intelligence all that should be gained has (now) been gained; you are that GOD who cannot be seen. (You are) free, so now put away confusion[2] (and doubt). (YV. 3 : 49-50) This indeed is (now) your only bondage, that you are still trying to practise Ecstasy![3] (AVG. 1 : 15)

4. For me and for you, and for you and for me the endless Blissful Self! (YV. 22 : 78) You are no other than your own form, you are even I alone—be sure (of that)! (TU. 5 : 74) Because of the fullness of the Highest Self there is no difference, and you are I alone![4] (MBU. 3 : 2)

[1] Cf. § 64 : 6 and *Gītā* 6 : 29.

[2] *bhrantim*. Cease from error, or wandering astray.

[3] This certainly cannot apply to an earlier stage, as described elsewhere in this 'Gospel', where effort at practising *Samadhi* is the essence of life.

[4] An almost Egyptian-sounding ending, with Gnostic colour. Cf. Brit. Mus. Gk. Pap. 122 : 2 (Kenyon, 1893, p. 116) : "For

Having known himself as the All including all, knowing that in his own realization of the Final Truth is equally involved the liberation of everyone—yet we have dared imagine the Freed Illuminate as calling thus to those still asleep in ignorance to break their bonds, to open their eyes to the brightness of the dawn, to step out bravely and boldly to the new life of Godhood.

Seeing all in all, knowing nothing but the self in everyone and everything, they should live in the light of that supernal wisdom. Steadily, anchored in the Truth, guided by its clear rays, let all abandon the false 'ego' which enslaves them and be free for ever in the ONENESS of the SELF, dedicating thereto every thought and word and deed—forgetting all save the Self.

This is the secret knowledge, the esoteric wisdom of the Knowers in every land and age; nothing more have they known than this—what else is there to be known when THIS alone exists? This is the aim of all great souls' strenuous efforts: to know that It is already there, not something to be sought or gained but eternally present as their own Self. Why then still make effort to attain It by laboriously practising spiritual methods?

Nothing IS but the Self. That am I, that too are all of you! Be that, as I have known myself as that—and in our common being we are manifested as the ONE. No longer you *and* I, no longer even we: now the 'I' is revealed in everyone. The long play is played, the curtain slowly falls, the drama of unreality comes to its close. Nothing is left now but the single Author of it all. "Be still, and know the 'I' is God!"

Thou art I and I Thou; Thy name is mine, and mine Thine, for I am Thy Reflection." (*su gar egō kai egō su, to son onoma emon kai to emon son, ego gar eimi to eidolon sou*) Our own text reads; *tvamevāham na bhedo asti pūrṇatvātparamātmanaḥ*. See also GH. p. 196.